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# LOVE AND LIBERATION.

THE SONGS OF ADSCHED OF MERU  
AND OTHER POEMS

BY

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*"O beauty on the darkness hurled,  
Be it through me you shame the world."*

—JOHN MASEFIELD





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SONGS OF ADSCHED OF MERU



# I

## THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE ROSE

*"See—how the roses burn!  
Bring wine to quench the fire."—*





## I

My soul looks toward you, as toward the coming  
Spring  
Soft folded flowers look up at dawn of day,  
Through grateful tears toward the liberating love,  
As April looks through starry tears toward May.

## II

I WOULD that I were a flower  
That encloses forevermore  
The "You" and the "Me" together,  
One in the deep heart's core.

The lover and the beloved  
She bears in her breast alone,  
Inextricably interwoven,  
Deep in her breast made one.

There in the being beloved  
The lover is rapt away;  
The lover, drenched through with the loved one,  
Laughs upward to greet the day.

In the chalice and cup of her beauty  
 Their mingled beauties unite,  
 Their ecstasies mingled in choir  
 Make odor of the dim light.

Ah there the lover with longing,  
 In the self beloved the most  
 Slips into the peace of her being,  
 In the depths of her being is lost.

We strive, and fall backward from beauty,  
 Twain from the war to be one,  
 But the pain of their warring is ended,  
 The race of their longing is run;

In the infinite peace of her bosom  
 Where silently bloom and blend  
 The longing for beauty, and beauty—  
 The origin and the end.

### III

O to be part of all I love the most,  
 Touch you, and live you, and breathe of you, and  
 die,  
 Sweet, of yourself, part of your blood and breath,  
 And pass into your beauty with a cry!

## IV

APRIL all my bosom  
Was breaking and my heart,  
Sorrowful in the Springtime  
I wandered, and apart.

I sought among the great,  
I sought among the wise;  
Scornful from my face  
They turned away their eyes.

But the belovèd knew,  
She took me to her breast,  
With her heart she stilled  
The heart of my unrest.

All the life within me  
I was so fain to give  
She touched with tears of pity,  
She took, and bade it live.

In the silence of her being,  
Her coverts dark and deep,  
The secret of her beauty,  
My sorrow fell asleep.

Whence my life forever  
Has found a flowering place,  
In the quiet of her bosom,  
The peace of her embrace.

## V

O FAR beyond the sorrow of myself  
I move to you, as the waning Winter moves  
Toward the dear Spring, leaving himself behind,  
Lest with one touch he mar the self he loves!

## VI

LIKE a young flower,  
Lovely and bare,  
My love spread her beauty  
On the dim air.

Like a soft breath  
On the breezes blown,  
Her loveliness lured  
My life to her own.

The cup of her beauty  
I entered within.  
Her beauty closed  
And folded me in.

Now must I die  
At the core of her heart,  
Shut from the world  
And sundered apart,

Lost in her life,  
In her loveliness slain;  
Sweet is the sorrow,  
Sweet is the pain.

## VII

FROM the sorrow of my being,  
From the self that I must be,  
For the mystery of your presence,  
Sweet, I thirst to set me free.  
  
Would that with your very selfhood  
You might wipe my own away,  
Lost forever all my sorrow  
In your joy, as night in day.  
  
To be one with you forever,  
Nor profane with any breath  
Of myself the self I love so,  
Triumphing beyond my death!

## VIII

WHERE is the Spring to be found  
And in what hidden place!  
Where four lips are joined together,  
Where lover and lover embrace;

In the call of the bird on the bough,  
 By the crocus bursting in bloom,  
 In the call of the voice beloved,  
 The whispering voice in the gloom,  
 The call of a voice through the dark  
 When all the world lies dumb,  
 When all the world lies sleeping,  
 "Sweetheart,—come—come!"

## IX

WOULD that into your being  
 Myself might slip, in the cup  
 Of the flower of your spirit  
 Forever folded up.

From all the outer terrors  
 And the ugliness, at the core  
 Of the chalice of your bosom,  
 Folded forevermore!

## X

LOVE, alas, within your bosom  
 Dwells the source of all my pain,  
 Everything that I desire  
 Most, her silent walls contain.

Dear, alas, within your bosom  
Heaves the whole Spring's starry breath,  
The one secret that I long for  
In the wastes of life and death;

The one secret that I long for,  
The one self for which I long,  
The hushed choir of my singing  
And the source of all my song.

Ah, the one soul 'mid a million  
Strewn like stars from east to west,  
The one soul that love has need of,  
Deep in the belovèd breast.

Deep within your heart it slumbers,  
Under life and loving deep,  
Like a spirit hid forever  
Under the dim veils of sleep.

## XI

WOULD that I might become you,  
Losing myself, my sweet!  
So longs the dust that lies  
About the rose's feet.

So longs the last, dim star  
 Hung on the verge of night—,  
 She moves, she melts, she slips,  
 She trembles into the light.

## XII

O BELOVÈD, when I heard it  
 From your lips my very name  
 First, how like a song it sounded,  
 Still the same, yet not the same!

To myself another meaning  
 Then was added, and a joy  
 All tongues after you repeating  
 Never wholly may destroy.

## XIII

PRESS closer to me, dear,  
 Ah, close and closer press—  
 Crush out with your sweet self  
 All the blind loneliness.



Press in with your sweet self  
 And crowd away my own,  
 Till for a space at least  
 I am no more alone.

O I thirst—I run to meet it,  
 As twilight runs to day—  
 To the dear opposite presence  
 That floods his own away!

#### XIV

“I WILL give you pain,” said Thought;  
 “I will give you toil,” said Fame;  
 Death said, “I will destroy  
 Utterly the fair dreams that you have wrought.”  
 O Death!  
 But the belovèd said:  
 “Come, come to my heart,  
 Come—I will give you Joy!”

#### XV

I THIRST, I thirst! O bare the springs of your spirit!  
 Dear, draw the veils of your inmost life aside,  
 And take me to the most secret place of your being,  
 Ever there to abide!

## XVI

My sweet has opened her heart  
And I have entered in!  
My sweet has opened her heart  
And I have entered in.

Her heart lies bared to my own  
As the fields to the trembling night,  
Her heart lies bared to my own,  
As the sea to the starry light.

Her heart lies bared to my own  
As the earth to the April rain;  
My sweet has opened her heart,  
And I have entered again!

II  
IN THE MIDNIGHT OF THY  
LOCKS

*"In the midnight of thy locks  
I renounce the day—"*



## I

Is it the nightingale's singing  
That wakes my heart like wine?  
Or is it your heart against me  
That makes her singing divine?

The starlight through the lattice,  
That bathes your bosom white,  
Trembles it with her song,  
Or the song with the starry light?

And is it but a dream?  
Or is the dreaming true?  
Is this that questions, I—,  
And this that answers, You—?

Hard it is to believe—,  
No more can we comprehend  
Love, when it is here,  
Than Death when it comes in the end.

## II

LIFT your arms to the stars  
And give an immortal shout,  
Not all the veils of darkness  
Can put your beauty out!

You are armed with love, with love,  
Nor all the powers of Fate  
Can touch you with a spear,  
Nor all the hands of Hate.

What of good and evil,  
Hell and Heaven above—,  
Trample them with love!  
Ride over them with love!

## III

WHEN side by side in the gloom  
Of the midnight our souls are laid,  
Darkness laps you about,  
Into a voice you fade.

Vanished the day's delusions—,  
Appearance that sunders apart,  
Again the darkness discovers  
Your very self to my heart.

By the sound of the breath of your words,  
 The cry of your soul from the Vast,  
 By the touch of your lips unseen,  
 I know you again at last.

## IV

'WAKE, beloved, awake!  
 Lift your head with the day!  
 Morning stamps his feet  
 And twilight is scattered away.

## V

HUSH—'tis the hour  
 When God with his world  
 Is in love; dew-impearled  
 Lies His love on each flower.

Now breast to bared breast  
 In the moment of love  
 Below and above  
 Thrills wild with unrest,

Thrills wild with unrest  
 Overflowing, and spills  
 Radiant rapture that fills  
 The dark, opposite breast.

Now the heart full thereof  
 Overflows into song,  
 Flowing softly along  
 In the rhythm of love,

In the night, in the night—  
 O listen—O hark!  
 God's love through the dark  
 Sheds the soft, starry light.

At the touch of His hand,  
 As on murmuring strings,  
 So tremble all things,  
 And all understand.

O love, let us blend  
 As sweet harmonies do,  
 With each other thrilled through,—  
 Touch, mingle, and end!

With a whispered "alas"—,  
 Inarticulate speech—,  
 Each into each  
 Murmur and pass!

## VI

WHEN moonlight bathes your breast,  
 When Song at your bosom sighs,  
 Beauty, meeting with beauty,  
 Turns backward with glad surprise.



When starlight floods your face,  
When music speaks to you,  
Beauty, touching with beauty,  
Grows lovelier through and through.

When Love at your bosom leans,  
When Love at your bosom dies,  
Beauty mingles with beauty—,  
Fulfilled the Creation lies.

## VII

My soul in the midnight hour  
Seeks yours in fear and doubt,  
But the answer in your bosom  
The twilight has put out.

Holy is the slumber  
Wherein you are sunken deep,  
And, after spent desire,  
The majesty of sleep.

## VIII

THE lightning flashed and lifted  
The lids of heaven apart.  
The fiery thunder rolled you  
All night long through my heart.

From dreams of you at dawn  
 I rose to the window-ledge,  
 The storm had died away—  
 The lake lapped on the sedge.

The lyre of heaven trembled  
 Still with the thought of you,  
 The twilight on the waters,  
 And all my spirit, too.

## IX

Now Morning rising from the arms of Twilight,  
 Baffled and inconsolable, above  
 The dear, worn breast and sacrificial body  
 Widens with aching love.

## X

WHAT you have given me  
 Night, nor day,  
 Nor Death, nor Time  
 Can take away.

The supreme gift,  
 All gifts above—,  
 Nought can repay,  
 Not all my love.

O most adored!  
O my delight!  
The day shall hear me  
And the night!

I will sound your name  
Through heaven and hell  
And the starred morning's  
Hollow shell!

I will make this joy  
Upon my lips  
Your trumpet  
To the Doom's eclipse!

Here with my heart  
I fall and bow  
Around your feet,  
And bless you now!

## XI

WHERE is the dream that filled me  
In the midnight with delight?  
And where is the angel that whispered  
Sweet words to me in the night?

Your face looks out at me laughing,  
 (The night is dead and done.)  
 The same, yet not the same, dear:—  
 The angel has come and gone.

## XII

THE pavilion of heaven trembles  
 With myriad tapers clear;  
 The light in the swinging censer  
 Burns low in your chamber here.

Now sleeps the heart of the world,  
 Her memories put away,  
 Now 'wake the immortal eyelids  
 After the rage of day.

The night wails 'round your window,  
 Heaven's beauty with bounty burns;  
 Slow stealing into my spirit  
 The grace of your presence returns.

By some spell, inviolate, holy,  
 I feel it lure me and draw  
 To yourself, some force as secret  
 And true as the starry law.

And I cry to you through the dark—,  
Your breathings measure the Deep—,  
I cry to you through your dreams,  
I cry to you through your sleep.

## XIII

THINK you that your lips  
Were meant for kisses alone,  
That only Love awakes  
When backward your head is thrown!

Wherever you turn your head  
All Beauty turns and sighs,  
At the opening of your lips  
A hundred poems arise.

Not children alone of the flesh,  
But children, too, of dream,—  
At the challenge of your beauty  
Into the daylight stream.

## XIV

My own is like a flower  
No influence touches in vain,  
Fairer she grows for the sunlight,  
And lovelier for the rain.

## XV

I HEARD a voice in the morning  
Cry, "'Wake—for Love is here!"  
Up through my dreams ascending  
I turned, and saw you near,

Close at my bosom sleeping—;  
Still I held your hand  
Reached to me in compassion  
Out of the silent land.

Gradual, soundless, slowly,  
Star on star of the night  
Moved with harmonious motion,  
Melted into the light.

The heart of the light dilated,  
Throbbing tense and clear—,  
"'Wake—for the stars are scattered!  
'Wake—for Love is here!"

## XVI

O LOVE, at your very breast  
For the sheer joy to be,  
Sobs the quick throat of Love,  
The heart breaks suddenly!

Love laughs through blinded lashes,  
 Hardly his eyes may bear,  
 Sweet, at your head to see  
 His arms for a halo there!

## XVII

THE morning-star is twinkling  
 Through rifted clouds withdrawn,  
 A single, flaming taper  
 In the bridal-chamber of Dawn.

Faint are the floors with flowers  
 And trodden blooms of day—,  
 One by one night's candles  
 Have dwindled and died away.

No sound disturbs the quiet—,  
 Silence forevermore.  
 Drawn are the twilit curtains,  
 Barred is the golden door.

## XVIII

NEVER, never this night  
 From my dreams shall pass away,  
 Her fiery memories burn  
 My heart out all the day.

Though I left you in the morning  
And walked among the crowd,  
Her nightingales followed singing  
Still in my heart aloud.

O and the gracious secret  
Within me, no one guessed!  
But I bore you within my heart,  
I bore you within my breast,

I bore you within my spirit,  
Though hidden and far away,  
As the stars unseen, but burning  
Still in the heaven of day!

## XIX

You have rushed to my arms,  
You have run to me now—  
You cling in my arms  
As a bird to a bough.

Dewed as the morning,  
Starry with tears,  
Up through your tresses  
Your face to me peers.



O the beauty persuasive!

The burden most dear!

Faint as I am

Again from me here,

Sweet as the Spring

From the earth as she slips,

Clinging you lure

The life from my lips!

## XX

THE night with her myriad tapers

Hung high in the heaven's height

Is lit for our bridal-chamber,

A chamber for our delight.

Till the last torch flicker and vanish,

Come, let us dwell evermore,

Love-drunken, sleepless, and weary,

Till daylight unbar the door!

## XXI

You have given me life,

You have given me joy,

You have given me peace

No sorrow can destroy.

O sweet, here at your feet,  
What is there left to give!  
The very love you have given  
That lives to help you live.

## XXII

THE swallow chirps her bridal-song  
Without your windows here,  
And the bright earth arrays herself  
For the bridal of the year.

The Spring lies beautiful and weary  
Beneath her lover the sun,  
Weary of all the shames and beauties  
That in the dusk were done.

Listen, almost about the earth  
You hear the mingled tone—,  
The pressing and the pleading lips,  
The triumph and the moan!

Your hair is decked with flowers, dear,  
And in your bosom sings  
The insatiate Beauty, but your eyes  
Are weary, like the Spring's.

## XXIII

THE world is reckless of beauty,  
Lavish of love as a bride:  
Is the flower not perfect enough,  
And has her perfume beside!

When the earth is fulfilled of herself  
And the heaven starry and clear,  
The nightingale floods the night  
For excess of exuberance sheer.

I, that was drunk with the joy  
Of mere earth and heaven above,  
You have come to me, You—;  
O, the waste and the bounty of love!

## XXIV

ALONG the mournful eastern rim  
Day lifts a flaming crest;  
Ah sweet, the night with all her love  
Bleeds out along the west—,  
I would not rise with day, but die  
With darkness at your breast!

## XXV

SLOWLY you sink into slumber,  
And one by one to my breast  
Crowd the white songs insistent,  
The voices that never rest.

From the land of sleep and of silence  
They bring me tidings of you—,  
I follow them seeking your spirit,  
I follow the long night through.

O far from your bosom they bore me  
And out of the tumult of things!  
O I followed, I floated above you—!  
In heaven I closed my wings.

By the side of your sleep, in the silence,  
Sleepless the whole night long,  
To the sound of the breath of your slumber  
I measured the breath of this song.

## XXVI

THE dawn, scattered with lilies  
And flowers pale and white,  
Is like your breast beginning  
The morning with delight.

## XXVII

Now Heaven and Earth  
Touch lips with delight;  
Her breast in the night  
To new flowers gives birth.

Sweet lightning of laughter  
Leaps earthward and slips.  
They mingle their lips—,  
The thunder sobs after.

It is silent again—  
O listen, O hark,  
God's love through the dark  
Sheds the soft, rushing rain!

Each flower her cup  
Toward the kindness above,  
The clear, filling love,  
Lifts thirstily up.

So do thou to mine,  
Till softly it slips,  
Sweet, from my lips,  
From my bosom to thine.

## XXVIII

DEAR, when I think how I love you,  
At the mere thought thereof,  
Brim the blind eyes with tears,  
Sobs the hurt throat for love.

How shall I ever sing it!  
How shall I ever say!  
Love, at the very thought,  
Turns trembling lips away.

## XXIX

WITH nothing of mine  
My soul was content;  
For a gift to yourself,  
Yourself I have sent.

## XXX

I ROAMED in the gray evening over field and hill,  
Above me the pale clouds were restless wanderers,  
And when the day was gone and all the fields were  
still  
The thought of you, deep in my heart, was like  
a thousand stars!

### III

## HYMNS AND ADORATIONS

*“Is Allah’s face on thee  
    Bending with love benign!  
And thou not less on Allah’s eye  
    O fairest, turnest thine—”*





## I

I SING the immortality of your body,  
A source and a well-head of immortal things,  
The terror of her secret and shadowy places,  
And the sad fount from which all being springs,  
The somber center of her stately beauty,  
Creation's throne, and the central source of all,  
Bounteous with life of teeming generations—,  
The home of love, though ages rise and fall;  
Immortal from generation to generation,  
Rearisen with every form of fleeting breath,  
Beloved and adored, a refuge and a salvation,  
The source of life amid the wastes of death.

## II

O SWEET, how the glory of loving,  
The pure and the fiery flame,  
Burns up away between us  
The clouds of fear and shame!

O love, like a radiant sunrise,  
 That gives itself away  
 Wholly, freely, gladly,  
 To perish of the day!

### III

UNDER the arch of the morning  
 I raise the voice of my song.  
 I sing the belovèd's beauty,  
 Her body stalwart and strong,  
 Her bosom, holy and white,  
 Virgin, a promise of things.  
 'Mid the manifold choir of all,  
 The morning's murmuring strings,  
 To the holy of heaven's holies  
 I press with lips that rejoice,  
 Under the temple of heaven  
 I raise the song of my voice.  
 I sing the bosom of Love,  
 Bounteous, east and west,  
 The sad and the sacred lips  
 And the sacrificial breast,  
 The arch of her body's endurance,  
 Doomed to endure and fulfill,  
 The patient pulse of her passion,  
 Her splendor stately and still.

At the sound of my spirit's crying  
 O'er the world the antiphonal choir  
 Breaks forth, of the mingled delight  
 Of the lips that endure and desire;

The woven voice of their warring  
 Made one with fierce rapture, the moan  
 Of the love that triumphs, the triumph  
 Of the love that is overthrown.

The holy altar of heaven,  
 Crowded with tapers dim,  
 Trembles for rapture, and flickers  
 At the breath of the sound of my hymn!

#### IV

THERE is no world,  
 There is no star  
 But I will find you  
 Where you are.

Not on Eternity's  
 Utmost cape  
 May you fly me  
 To escape.

O my delight,  
 Your beauty's will  
 Drives me on,  
 And lures me still!

Tireless effort  
You raise me to,  
And years of labor,  
All for you.

Though fain to rest  
In the days to be,  
From the opposite end  
Of Eternity.

Heaven's length I'd run  
With giddy feet,  
To pour my spirit  
Through you, sweet!

## V

As a cupbearer to the side  
Of one who is thirsting slips,  
When I cried for Joy  
You held it to my lips.

Graciously, nor denied me.  
O as one from the desert lands,  
To the dregs, to the last, sweet dregs,  
I drained it from your hands.

I cried for Love, for Love—  
To my lips you held it up  
With brave and generous hands,  
The sacrificial cup.

## VI

THE musk that the morning wind  
Brings me to greet,  
Is the breath of you, sweet,  
And the sense of you, sweet.

The flowers that bow  
At his coming their faces  
Are mirrors of you  
In a myriad places.

And the love in me, too,  
And the song in me, too,  
Is the echo of you,  
And the music of you!

## VII

THE earth, for the joy of bearing  
Your weight upon her breast,  
Laughs in a thousand flowers  
From the east-land to the west.

Against the heart to take it,  
The darling body and bright—  
To take it and to break it,  
She hungers day and night.

Hourly toward her bosom  
She draws it downward close,  
Even till at the center  
In sleep it shall repose.

## VIII

Your body's motion is like music,  
Her stride ecstatic and bright  
Moves to the rhythm of dumb music,  
The unheard music of delight.

The silent splendor of the Creation  
Speaks through your body's stately strength,  
And the lithe harmony of Beauty  
Undulates through its lovely length.

And rhythmically your bosom's arches,  
Alternately, with every breath  
Lift lifeward in long lines of beauty,  
And lapse along the slopes of death.

## IX

If I catch you up to my heart  
Here, where the pulses ache,  
Almost the heart cries out,  
Almost the heart would break.

O love, at my living side,  
Here where the pulses crowd!—  
The holy heart of longing  
Breaks, and sobs aloud.

## X

From the evening-land of twilight  
To the morning-land of day  
There is no Love like my Love,  
So perfect every way.

O Love, how fair you are,  
How laughable and sweet,  
How terrible and strange  
From your forehead to your feet!

Were not your eyes enough  
To wound me, O my own!  
All your little beauties  
Are spears to hunt me down.

## XI

FROM the south to the north  
None is happy as I,  
I sing to the wind  
That goes galloping by.

My lyre is heard  
In the desert of Time,  
All hearts shall beat  
To the heart of my rhyme.

I am drunken with love,  
I am careless of death,  
I draw them in  
And out with my breath.

O abandon yourself  
To an ecstasy sheer—  
Forget how to doubt—  
Forget how to fear!

To him who has love  
Good and Evil are one,  
He has but to love,  
And the beauty is done.

My Love is my joy  
From the day-spring of light,  
Through the flame of the noon,  
To the shadow of night;



From the hour when first  
The immaculate star  
Of evening arises  
To westward afar,  
Till his wheel in the sea  
White Sirius dips.  
She has kissed with her own  
This song on my lips!

## XII

WOULD you not have me love you  
Or remember any more,  
Stab my breast to the heart.  
Stab my heart to the core.  
Give my ghost to drink  
Of the cup Oblivion,  
"Forget, for the love of me,"  
Write these words thereon.

## XIII

LIKE a temple in the moonlight  
Shines your body's stately grace,  
Somber, bathed in sumptuous shadow,  
Filled with many a luminous space.

In the choir of your bosom  
 All is hushed and laid at rest,  
 Sleep and sleep alone possesses  
 The dim altar of your breast.

Only through her labyrinthine  
 Arches, like far echoes, roll  
 Whispers, memories of hushed music,  
 Hints of the departed soul.

Now the life that but so lately  
 Clung to mine is laid at rest,  
 Now delight and love are silent,  
 And the answer in your breast.

#### XIV

THERE only is one hell  
 Below, one heaven above,  
*One* for those you hate,  
*One* for those you love.

O love, what must I do  
 To gain the heavenward way?  
 I will kiss upon your lips  
 A thousand prayers a day,

Do penance at them daily  
For kisses left undone,  
And daily in your arms  
Renounce all gods but one!

## XV

Love has robes of splendor,  
Love has cruel eyes,  
Love is swift and heartless  
Till the great sacrifice.  
Then fall all veils from off her,  
All masks of mirth, or moan,  
Radiant, naked, holy—  
Love is Love alone.

## XVI

O SWEET, are the hours thorny!  
Do the hours bruise you, sweet!  
Lay my heart between,  
Lay my heart at your feet.  
Does it beat against them rudely!  
Tread it into the ground.  
The blood that leaps to kiss them  
Shall wash them of their wound.

## XVII

FEAR not the powers below,  
Fear not the powers above,  
Nor death, nor fate, nor hate—  
More terrible is Love.

The panthers and the leopards  
Tug meekly at his car.  
Love is never weary,  
And cometh from afar.

Though you fly before the morning  
Till the east become the west,  
You shall meet him mouth to mouth,  
You shall meet him breast to breast.

All heaven's heads bow down  
And all the throats of hell  
Cry up to him, his face  
Is holy and terrible.

## XVIII

HEAVEN rings 'round with the rapture  
And the radiant reaches above,  
"Death, that from all sets free,  
Frees us not from Love!"

## XIX

TELL me why I love you,  
Name yourself, my Heart,  
Every inward bounty,  
Every outward art:

The hands, the lips, the eyes,  
The beauty in your breast,  
Your very inmost spirit  
Separate from the rest.

When your lips have ceased,  
When your words have done,  
I will answer you,  
"Not for these alone."

## XX

WEARY is age  
And the record thereof—,  
O young is my love,  
An unwritten page!

Her soul is a flower  
But newly begun,  
On her petals the sun  
Has shone but an hour.

Wild as the Spring,  
Ecstatic and sweet  
Is her body, and meet  
To be sung of and sing.

Athletic and pure  
As a wave of the sea,  
To follow and flee,  
Give and endure!

Splendidly moved  
To swift strides along,  
Stalwart and strong  
To love, and be loved!

O, as clouds from afar  
That mingle and move,  
We hasten with love,  
As star unto star!

O, as swallows that dart  
Through the heaven of day,  
We follow as they,  
Touch, and depart!

With four arms about,  
Two bosoms laid bare,  
Age, sorrow, and care  
From our world we shut out!

## XXI

WHAT shall I dare to give you,  
Who have but love to give,  
Who have but one forever,  
To love you and to live!

I will give you love that loves,  
Love with willing hands,  
Love that soars and sings,  
Love that understands.

## XXII

WHERE is the land of You  
And how shall I find the way?  
If to that land I come  
Never again will I stray.

A land that is yours completely,  
Where no other name is known;  
Where no other faces greet me,  
No voice but yours alone.

There are no arms but your arms,  
No bosom but yours is there,  
Each flower in all that island  
Is sweet with the breath of your hair.

Leaf to leaf of the trees  
 Whispers your name, your name;  
 The roses blush with your beauty,  
 The lilies are white for shame.

To copy the veins in your temples  
 The violets take their hue,  
 And the sun that rises in heaven,  
 And the moon that sets is You.

## XXIII

WHEN no more at my bosom  
 I lift you with each breath  
 Breathing has lost its purpose—,  
 Each breath is a wave toward death.

## XXIV

MY Love of you will love you  
 When all my love is done;  
 My Love of you will love you  
 When I am dead and gone.

I am mutable and weary,  
 Made of dust and clay,  
 I shall fade and perish,  
 I shall pass away.



He is drunk and filled with joy,  
 He is crowned with joy and shod,  
 His eyelids never sleep—,  
 He has kissed the lips of God.

*He* alone is holy,  
*He* alone is strong—;  
 His lamp is in my heart,  
 His sword is in my song.

## XXV

FAR from your heart I wander.    Twilight closes.  
 Far from your heart I roam.  
 Dear, in the sweet, pale west your soul arises,  
 A star—to call me home.

## XXVI

ALL honey and gold your body is, of fashion  
 Lovely and liberal; in a world of sadness  
 Bearing the old and the barbaric gladness,  
 The ruddy joy, the bounteous compassion.

Her beauty's challenge, like clear trumps of warning  
 Blown from the throne of God with royal splendor,  
 Summons to love, the eloquent and tender  
 Lines of her grace unfolded like the morning.

Ever she sounds, with royal reverberation  
Of ringing pulses and rhythm of grace supernal,  
The call to joy amid the doom eternal,  
The golden words of the great invitation!

## XXVII

If you fly before me  
Into Paradise  
I will follow upward,  
Lifted by your eyes.

The ecstasy of heaven  
You sit, serene and mute,  
Your shining head the angels  
With my own songs salute.

Not strange will it seem to enter,  
Led upward by your eyes;  
So often have you led me  
Into Paradise.

## XXVIII

As the twilight, for sheer love  
And abandoned ecstasy,  
For the sake of the dear dawn  
Dies, that dawn may come to be;

Dumb with adoration dies  
At the lovely, panting breast,  
For sheer rapture of sacrifice  
Bows his face along the west,

O to perish for your sake,  
O, as twilight to the day,  
To your loveliness athirst  
Give my very self away!

So I know it is your love  
That demands it, not your hate;  
Love is kind, but very fain,  
And implacable as Fate.

## XXIX

AGAINST your cheek, and bosom,  
Radiant, pure, and white,  
I have heard what the stars of morning  
Sang, singing for delight.

The words the angels whispered  
My soul before the birth,  
I have heard their echoes wafted  
Again about the earth.

Lest ever I forget them,  
 One, where the stars abide,  
 Lays your arms about,  
 Sets your lips beside.

## XXX

I WOULD give you love for love,  
 I would give you love for pain,  
 I would give you love for hate  
 Ten-thousandfold again.

Love, not I, is master.  
 Love is great and kind.  
 Love runs on to *love* you  
 And leaves all self behind.

## XXXI

THROUGH the labyrinth of your bosom  
 Like an organ's I hear it roll,  
 In the thunderous anger of love,  
 The pulse of the wrath of your soul;  
  
 At your bosom's barbaric splendor,  
 Lifting with fierce delight  
 Long lines of exuberant beauty,  
 In the hush, in the night, in the night,

Lifting with vast exultation,  
 Forever and sleeplessly,  
 In the most reverent rhythm  
 Of riotous ecstasy:

In the radiant rhythm of rapture  
 And the lightnings of fierce delight,  
 In the storm of most riotous rapture,  
 In the hush, in the night, in the night!

## XXXII

WHEN the earthly joy is ended  
 And the earthly love is done,  
 My soul, with memory drunken,  
 To the flaming doors will run.

Angelic lips shall hail me  
 With my own songs in the Vast—,  
 The angel that I loved so  
 Shall lift me up at last.

## XXXIII

THE sheer, the infinite gratitude,  
 Never to be expressed,  
 Puts out the light, that flickers,  
 Of Song within my breast.

Love to the most belovèd,  
The dear and the bounteous soul,  
The giver and the beauty,  
The summons and the goal,—

Empty-handed, defeated,  
With all his singing shed,  
Returns with love forever  
Too holy to be said.

## XXXIV

BURY me east or west, when you come I will rise to  
greet you.

I will rise to greet you with love if you come where  
I lie in the south.

If you come to my grave in the north with love I will  
rise to greet you,

And a song on my mouth.

IV  
RADIANT NOON

*"Love on thy beauty breaks a shattered wave"*





## I

ALMOST against your heart  
My beating heart has grown,  
Hardly your very lips  
Are separate from my own.

To suit myself to your breast,  
To suit myself to your will,  
Is the first thought at dawn,  
The last at evening still.

To lay aside myself  
And be yourself instead,  
Daily I give my life,  
And rise with Song from the dead.

Yet virgin as the morning,  
Unconquerable and free,  
And strange as at the first meeting,  
Ever you come to me.

O the lure of you and the secret,  
Fairer a thousandfold,  
Like the stars is ever new,  
Like the stars is ever old!

## II

UNDER the flowing robe of our folded love  
In the bright rhythm of riotous ecstasy,  
Rapt, from ourselves to the stars we reach upward,  
made one  
With the world-rhythm of all things striving to be;  
Trampling down death with fierce rapture, we triumph  
for one  
Magnificent moment of rapt immortality.

## III

WHERE the feet belovèd tread  
The urgent flowers throng,  
Light breaks, sound issues, breathless  
Beats the heart of Song.

A vibrance fills all Beauty  
With motion and excess,  
The trodden flowers bless her,  
The wounded flowers bless.

The old and the sacred challenge  
Summons and compels;  
Up through the breast of being  
The immortal wonder wells.

Song, that was laid at rest,  
Again must learn to live,  
Love, that has given all,  
Again must die to give.

## IV

THOUGH you dwelt  
In the farthest West,  
The sun should lead me  
To your breast.

When his light  
Was ebbd and gone  
The evening-star  
Should lead me on.

And if that  
Left heaven above  
I would journey  
Led by love.

I would seek you  
Till my heart,  
Wearied out,  
Fell apart.

At your door  
I'd lay me down—,  
Not to wake you.  
O my own!

Nor sleep all night,  
Nor sleep all night,  
To hear your breathing  
Soft and light.

## V

O WOULD in the moment of love  
I might bid the stars stand still,  
And the wheel of the world repose,  
Fixed and immovable!

On the starry summits of beauty  
Locked in a long embrace,  
With hair blown backward, together,  
Breathless, and face to face!

Ere the vision be shattered, and headlong  
From our dream in the heights we be hurled,  
From the cry of our spirits in choir,  
Back into the pit of the world.

## VI

OF all God's living poems  
 Scattered from east to west,  
 Sweet, you are the dearest  
 That ever fell from His breast.

## VII

WHITE morning awakes.  
 Dawn breaks her bars.  
 God's breath through the stars  
 Flickers and shakes.

Again to the sky  
 Leaps the day with delight,  
 Again turns the night  
 To his bosom to die.

With fierce passion they move,  
 With the rapture of pain,  
 Rearisen again  
 From the fountains of love.

In the old, weary way  
 The old beauty is done—,  
 Like a lover, the sun  
 Leaps to the day.

O and I with the rest,  
 I, tireless, too—  
 I, unto you,  
 I, to your breast!

## VIII

With the longing of a lover  
 To possess the once possessed,  
 The deep need for the familiar,  
 For the most belovèd breast,

For the heart the heart has grown to,  
 The dear lips, well-worn, well-known—,  
 To yourself, as to a refuge,  
 Song turns ever from his own.

As a boy's heart first surrounded,  
 When shame first is put to rout,  
 With the sweet, relentless hunger  
 Of girl-arms first laid about;

To yourself, still new, still wondrous,  
 —The dear, opposite, luring love,—  
 As at first Song still surrenders  
 All the ecstasy thereof.

## IX

DAILY from breasts o'erthrown  
To Beauty's immortal knees  
The sacrifice of love  
Rises to appease.

## X

For the sheer joy  
Of gratitude  
I shed my songs  
Like living blood.

I stab my heart  
With the thought of you,  
To kiss the blade  
The song pours through;

To touch and thrill  
And fill you, sweet,  
With living love  
From head to feet!

## XI

WITH the sullen rhythm of rapture,  
As of thousand viols in throng  
Slow thrilling with resonant rapture,  
My bosom draws you along,

Slow lapsing with resonant rapture—;  
And buoyant with glad excess  
Lifts up the long level and follows  
Your own with exuberant stress.

O love, as a storm from heaven  
With laughter of lightning that leaps,  
As a cloud through the darkness of heaven,  
As a cloud through the billowing deeps,

With delight, as of thousand viols  
Drawn across by deep bow-strings in throng,  
In a holy whirlwind of rapture  
I whirl you and bear you along!

Till the light break through it of love,  
Break—and from sea to sea  
Spans, in a shining shower,  
The rainbow of ecstasy.

## XII

NEVER your beauty  
Can satisfy me,  
'Tis but as a rose  
Tossed into the sea.



Though I gazed to the doom,  
Till mine eyes had grown old,  
In the morning again  
I had eyes to behold.

Though I died in your arms  
At dawn of delight,  
At your chamber again  
Should find me the night.

O, as clouds to the earth  
In a shower of rain,  
I return, I return  
To perish again!

### XIII

WHEN you spread your arms to take me,  
When your breath comes hard and fast,  
Song and love of Song forsake me  
At the source of Song at last.

Hushed and folded at your bosom  
Starry longing fades away,  
In yourself all memories of you  
Melt, as morning into day;

Till I rise, refreshed and quickened,  
 To resume the singing race,  
 From the oblivion of your bosom,  
 From the death of your embrace.

## XIV

O INSATIABLE and sweet,  
 Loved more than I can say!  
 Take my whole of love  
 And cast it all away.

Ask more of me and more,  
 More than I can give—  
 Waste it at your lips—  
 It is not fit to live.

Waste it in a breath,  
 All that I have spent;  
 Ask more of me and more,  
 And still be discontent.

Ask more of me and more,  
 Till Love have nothing more.  
 O insatiable and sweet,  
 Ask more of me and more!

## XV

NEVER can I escape you  
Though I roam the whole world through—,  
If I leave you, journeying westward,  
From the east I come to you.

## XVI

WITH weariness abandoned  
And the ecstasy of pain  
Love returns to love you  
Again and yet again.

Insatiate as the sunrise,  
Sleepless, flushed, and bright,  
Returning and returning  
To perish of the light;

Seraphically weary,  
As toward the twilight, day,—  
Love to what is lovely  
Gives himself away.

## XVII

O MY own, my delight,  
I am here at your call,  
Soul, body and all,  
In the day, in the night!

Not grudgingly, never  
Yours by decree,  
By rights that must be,  
But wholly and ever.

The poets above  
Sing sadly of Beauty,  
Of Love and of Duty—  
I give you my love.

O, as waves of the sea  
The waves flowing after,  
I draw you with laughter,  
I follow and flee!

O, as storms in a crowd  
To the meadows laid bare,  
I rush to you there,—  
I fade as a cloud!

Lest loving should grieve you,  
As joy grieves the heart,  
I touch you, and part,  
I love you, and leave you.

Yet still, like a star  
That the daylight obscures,  
I return, I am yours,  
I return from afar.

## XVIII

To his grave within your bosom  
Song returns with weary wings,  
To the source whence first his ardors  
Broke with love that soars and sings,

To his sunset in your bosom,  
Vast, seraphical, and bright,  
Where, as at heaven's widening wonder  
Dies the wild and wayward light;

To his grave where in your bosom,  
As the twilight in the west,  
He must perish, he must perish—,  
To the silence of your breast.

## XIX

DAILY would I give  
All the love I have  
To break against your beauty  
Like a wasted wave.



V

BIRD-SONGS AND ROSES

*“Would I might hide me in my song  
To kiss the lips from which it flows—”*





## I

ONCE on a starry night,  
Once on a starry night,  
Dear, I was full of you  
As the dawn of the young, sweet light.

The rare, wild pulse of your presence  
Flooded me through and through;  
Fresh from your arms I rose,  
Quickened and filled with you!

Since when my heart and my body,  
My song and my spirit, too,  
Are quickened and filled with you,  
Quickened and filled with you!

## II

THE air is full of dawn and Spring,  
Outside the room I see  
A swallow, like a shaft of light,  
Shift sideways suddenly.

There is no room for death at all  
In earth or heaven above;  
He never yet believed in death  
Who ever learned to love.

Build me a tomb when I am dead,  
But leave a window free  
That I may watch the swallow's flight,  
And Spring come back to me.

Build me a tomb of steel and stone,  
But leave *one* window free,  
That I may feel the Spring come back  
And You come back to me!

### III

Who mixes with radiant Beauty  
Himself to beauty grows,  
Fresh with the roseleaf slips  
The raindrop from the rose.

The cloud, that to the sunrise  
Stoops as to a bride,  
Bright from her breast returns,  
Quickened and glorified.

Touching at its source  
And sunrise again, the soul  
Back from the breast of love  
Quickened returns, and whole.

So lovelier from your lips  
Each day I rise again,  
And stain against your breast  
More — a lovelier stain

When the wild heart grows wayward  
Straightway within it stirs,  
In the blood's beat to subdue it  
And lead it back to hers,

The pulse of the belovèd  
That thrills it through and through.—  
O heart-beat of my heart,  
How may I fly from you!

## VI

BEAUTY is contagious,  
It springs from age to age,  
From poet unto poet,  
Page to shining page.

A little from your lips  
And from your eyes, my dove,  
Mine catch fire with  
Forever, Song and Love.

## VII

THE twilight is starred,  
The dawn has arisen—,  
Light breaks from the east  
And Song from her prison.

Faint odors and sounds  
The west-wind discloses  
Of flowers and birds,  
Of laughter and roses.

It is time to be gone,  
Day scatters the gloom—  
But still at my side,  
But here in the room,

Like the angel of Life,  
Too kind to depart,  
You hang at my lips!  
You hang at my heart!

## VIII

THERE, wherever you come,  
A Springtime breath and bloom  
You bring with you of love,  
That floods the very room.

When you are fled away  
Still trembles through the gloom  
A breath, a sense of love,  
That floods the very room.

## IX

My love has chained and humbled me  
That was once so heaven-free;  
To Beauty and the lure thereof  
She chained me with the chain of love.

She came to me with silent feet,  
My heart trembled, the blood beat—,  
Up through my life the longing welled  
That her loveliness compelled.

Life, and love, and song, and all  
She steals from me who am her thrall,  
Till my very self has grown,  
Through long love, into her own;

Till at her breast in starry pain  
Surrendering, radiantly self-slain,  
I die to be re-born again!

## X

To the lordship of her being  
And the dear heart above  
The loveliness belovèd  
Bows down the heart of love.

How sweet the yoke of beauty  
And the soft arms that chain  
Love's flight, from the belovèd  
How sweet the touch of pain!

She bids all hearts be humbled,  
That wait for love's reward,  
To the laughable, lovely beauty—  
O love, it is not hard!

## XI

MORE beautiful unto myself  
Myself through the love of you grows—  
If the sweetness be hers, or the rose's,  
Hardly the west-wind knows.

## XII

As a wind from over the flowers,  
Sweet from the flowers grown,  
Yourself I bear unto all men  
And think that it is my own.

## XIII

ALTHOUGH your arms around me  
At morning fade away,  
Around me in my spirit  
I feel them all the day.

Not all at once you leave me,  
But, gradually with pain  
Withdrawing, leave behind you  
A print in nerve and vein:



Possessive, sweet, and poignant,  
A May-time pang and scent,  
The perfume of your presence  
Through all my pulses sent.

Within my blood a memory  
And sense of you, like Spring,  
Lingers fading, fading—,  
And in the songs I sing.

## XIV

'Tis not my foes  
That have brought me low,  
Nor conquered me  
The arm of a foe.

Two eyebrows arched,  
My head in the drouth  
Of the dust have rolled—,  
And a laughing mouth.

## XV

O LIPS that mine have wearied  
So many and many a time—,  
O heart that mine has beat to  
Through all the ways of rhyme!

Almost into yourself  
My very self has grown—  
Hardly your lips, my sweet,  
Are separate from my own!

But again and again to have you,  
To be mingled more and more  
With the loveliness I love so,—  
Insatiate as before—

With the inmost pulse of your presence  
To be flooded through and through,  
O irrevocably to be mixed  
With the very self of you!

My life turns back forever,  
How many and many a time,  
With ecstasy abandoned  
And weariness sublime!

## XVI

MY Own is proud and cruel  
All other hearts above,  
She has chained me to her chariot  
With the chain of love.

O imperious and lovely!  
O laughable, my Own!  
I acknowledge you and greet you,  
I bow before your throne.

## XVII

I AM filled, I am filled,  
I am filled full of you,  
As the meadows with light,  
As the morning with dew!

Mine alone, of all born,  
Is elected the breast  
To be bearer of you  
To the East and the West.

For joy all the day,  
For joy all the night,  
My love cries aloud.  
I laugh for delight!

The beautiful burden  
At heart, I go forth,  
Drunken with song,  
To the South and the North.

O all men and women  
 And angels, draw near—  
 Look in my heart!  
 Look—what is here!

## XVIII

ALL my love for my sweet  
 I bared one day to her—,  
 Carelessly she took it  
 And like a conqueror.

She bowed the neck of my soul  
 To fit it to her yoke,  
 She bridled the lips of Song—;  
 Fear within me awoke.

But Love cried, "Swiftly, swiftly  
 Bear her along the road,  
 Beautiful is the goal  
 And Beauty is the goad."

## XIX

Your beauty fades into my circling strength,  
 As the pale starlight into the wide day.  
 Ah love, but when the noon of joy is passed,  
 Fulfilled of you, filled full of you at last,  
 Backward into your beauty ebbs my strength,  
 As into the worn twilight the wild day!

## XX

ONE molten star,  
Afar withdrawn,  
Winks liquid lids  
In the web of dawn.

The web of the dew  
O'er the world lies spun.  
The choir of the birds  
Salutes the sun.

Bird-songs and roses'  
Faint perfume  
Flood through the window  
Of the dim room.

But you lie laughing  
For sweet excess  
In the wild hour  
Of loveliness,

In the dear rage  
Of reckless love.  
The worn star pales  
In heaven above.

The morning widens  
On the clear rim—,  
Ah the last star  
Grows pale and dim!

O fuller and fuller  
Through the vast  
And hollow vault,  
At last, at last,

Floods the quick flame  
Of influent fire!  
With all the tongues  
Of her core in choir,

Bathed round in light  
And trembling dew,  
With the life beloved  
Thrilled through and through,

The heart of the world  
For love that aches,  
Filled full, too full,  
Leaps up and breaks.

At the bright breast  
Of burning day  
Breaks, and gives  
Herself away!

Breaks, and at  
The mere touch thereof  
Overflows in a rapture  
Of welling love!

One with a cry,  
In the morning's white  
Serene expanse  
Of vast delight,

One with a moan,  
In the holy and thrilled  
Dread hush at last  
Of all fulfilled,

Through laughter and tears  
Re-mingling, we  
Crown the world-chord  
With ecstasy.

## XXI

EVER from your embrace  
Refreshed I arise and strong,  
With a new song from your lips,  
And from your heart with a song.

## XXII

THROUGH all my body, nerve and vein,  
Sweet traces linger of your own;  
As Winter, that at Spring's heart has lain,  
Almost into the Spring has grown.

I am drenched with you and saturate,  
 As the morning with the young, bright dew—  
 As the sea-wind with the fresh, far sea  
 I am drunken and saturate with you.

Through all my spirit, dream and deed,  
 Sweet traces linger of your own—  
 Through love of you, through love of you,  
 Almost yourself, sweet, am I grown!

## XXIII

As a star that from light's prison  
 Freed, returns to prisoning light;  
 From your breast, dear, to your breast, dear,  
 Measures all my freedom's flight.

## XXIV

LIFE went forth in the strength  
 Of the morning from his lair—  
 The first young Joy he found,  
 He seized it by the hair.

So ruthlessly your heart  
 Against my own I pressed,  
 And whirled against my own  
 The radiance of your breast.



But clinging about my neck  
Your arms to a taming yoke  
Grew, that stilled my heart;  
Love within me awoke.

Then at first was I sad—,  
But the old, the rebellious strength  
Tore my lips apart,  
Turned to a song at length!

## XXV

SONG at the source of Song  
Sweet it is to confess,  
And loveliness to humble  
At the feet of Loveliness.



VI  
THE MYSTERY AND THE  
MYTH

*“The touch, the clasp, the old, sweet earthly fashion  
Of love is but a lovely allegory—”*



## I

Now in the east  
The old mystery of love is done again,  
Along the east  
Burns the huge rapture of her ecstatic pain:

Sweet foes forever—  
Twilight, with whom Day's fiery outlines blend  
Till she be lost—  
And Light at war with Darkness till the end.

In the old way  
Is done again the most reverent sacrifice,  
Twilight and Day  
Mingle, the breast that lives and the breast that dies.

The breast that lures,  
And the most patient and sacrificial breast;  
The breast that endures  
And the breast that fulfills quicken with one unrest.

Dear foes forever  
And lovers, in the old war of love and life,  
Opposites ever  
And loving opponents in the eternal strife!

Along the east  
 Their bright limbs burn through the clouds that they  
     divide,  
 Along the east  
 Their luminous love, like a bridegroom and a bride.

Radiant they mix—  
 The splendor of the bright love that longs to live,  
 The patient shadow  
 Of the dark love that gives, and dies to give.

A sudden hush,  
 As of bowed heads and reverence forevermore—  
 Morning arises.  
 Radiant o'er the wide world his waters pour!

Morning arises,  
 Hailed with a myriad songs to the living sun,  
 Beauty completed,  
 And the old sacrifice and mystery done.

## II

### THE WIND AND THE SEA

SWEET, you tremble,  
     Sweet, you move  
 Like a woman  
     In the anger of love.

For love of you,  
For love of you,  
My body trembles  
Through and through.

Dear, my heart  
Beats laughingly  
To feel your beauty  
Under me.

My body's joy,  
The heart you press  
Sobs, beneath  
Your loveliness.

Let me have you  
All my own,  
Bared to me  
And overthrown!

Let us mingle,  
You and I,  
Each of each  
Drink, and die!

Let me fill you  
With my strength!  
Pour my love  
Through all your length!

O the glad love  
That bids me live!  
I lift my lips.  
Give—give!

## III

NIGHT looked forth from the tower of morning  
Over the flowery lands,  
She took the young and the sickle moon  
For a scimitar in her hands,

And drove the stars along the sky  
Like little wanton foes—  
She saw not 'twas her lover the sun  
Who slew them as he rose.

He rushed to meet her, she let fall  
Her flowers and hid her face;  
He drowned her in his arms all day  
In the light of his embrace.

And died for love of her. At dusk  
She left him where he lay,  
And rose with silent laughter up  
Along the starry way.



## IV

O THE challenge that burns  
In a laughing girl's eyes!  
The boy's heart that turns,  
The heart that replies!

The joy that fulfills,  
And the love that endures—,  
The heart that follows,  
The heart that lures!

In the old, fierce war  
Of woman and man,  
Their secret battle  
Since life began,

Dear foes forever  
And opposites still;  
Fulfillers forever  
Of one deep will!

## V

WITH the foam-white arms of virgins  
In choral flocks afar  
The thronging billows rustle  
And race across the bar.

They follow the god with longing  
Along the sunlit way,  
With silver footsteps thronging,  
And laughter up the bay,

With little, delicate bodies  
Poised dancing; the sun's flame  
Pierces them—all the water  
Quivers for love and shame.

## VI

You are the bright, curved shore,  
And I the waves that destroy  
On her beauty their strength  
With joy, with joy.

The meadow you,—I, the storm  
That dies to shed from above  
On her flowers his life,  
With love, with love.

I am the bird that follows,  
And you the hills of the south.  
—The loving mouth,  
And the laughing mouth.

O love, I, the arrow that speeds  
Hungrily to its mark,  
And you, the breast  
That sinks in the dark!

The hurrying heart that follows,  
The hushed, sweet heart that flies,  
The heart that exults,  
The heart that sighs!

Ever, forever, the spirit  
That seeks, and the spirit that lures,  
The love that fulfills,  
The love that endures!

## VII

TOWARD the girl the boy's face turning  
Flashes with keen love's delight,  
For her beauty ever draws him  
Nearer with ecstatic might.

And she reads the wordless challenge,  
And most swiftly she replies,  
Darting scorn in ardent challenge  
From the heaven of her eyes.

Each in each through veils of terror  
Recognizes, dimly known  
Through dim beauty, the dear beauty  
That makes war upon his own.

Yet she has the woman's pity  
For her lover, she arrays  
For his joy her body's beauty  
Secretly in many ways.

And to bathe amid the aura  
Of her being, draw more near  
To her maidhood (is his longing),  
Dewy-fresh and morning-clear;

To be spilt across her beauty  
All his ardor, to destroy  
On her love the clear and crystal  
Radiance of his running joy.

Till they rush and flow together,  
Interpenetrate and blend,  
Weaving into one another  
With white rapture at the end.

Till the soft yoke of her beauty  
Tame, and all subdue the stress  
Of his wild and veering ardor,  
Humbled in her loveliness!

## VIII

THE sea-wind seizes the sea-wave  
And breaks her beauty in two;  
She sobs, she sinks, she flutters,  
She trembles all through and through,  
"Sweet, I die, I die,  
Of you, at least of you!"

## IX

THE lover's radiant longing in the calm  
Reality of the self beloved dies,  
The mother in her children, the brave Spring  
Of the insatiate Summer's young, sweet eyes.

The soft, unselfish darknesses but roll  
Around the stars to make them be more bright.  
Death suffers to be unlovely that more clear  
Shine out the lovely face of Life's delight.

Honor the young and the rejoicing Dawn  
For whose dear sake the Twilight dies away,  
Nor quite forget the sacrificial part  
The tender and self-renouncing shadows play.

## X

RECKLESS and free,  
In his arms with delight,  
Like a bride bare and bright,  
The Wind seizes the Sea.

The Wind seizes the Sea  
That his longing denies  
And opposes, and sighs,  
And strains to be free.

They wrestle and close  
In the long, foaming fields,  
Till her loveliness yields  
And lies down in repose.

She lies down like a bride  
To accept of his will,  
And the waters are still,  
The wave-ways subside.

He bows her waves over,  
Her strength overthrown  
Lies bared to his own,  
As lover to lover.

O with rhythmical stress  
She sobs softly under  
The weight of that wonder,  
That wild loveliness!

She flutters and moves,  
O to feel, overthrown,  
Triumph over her own  
The life that she loves!

Her body that sighs  
Leans upward to crave—  
O wave on sweet wave  
Foams upward, and dies!

At the touch of his strength;  
Till all of her love  
To the lover above  
Lies subject at length.

Ere his life draw away,  
And bride-like she lies,  
Panting soft with closed eyes,  
In disheveled array,

With quick heaving breast  
Where his beauty was borne,  
Seraphic and worn,  
And weary, and blessed.

## XI

ON the breast of the Morning  
The Twilight again  
Love-drunken leans,  
Ere she be slain.

The heart of the Morning  
Is kind, but his eyes  
Are sleepless with love—  
Drinking she dies.

On the beautiful bosom,  
Bright with disdain,  
Breaks the dear heart  
Of the Twilight in twain.

## XII

My longing, like the rain-wind,  
Whose sorrow bends above  
The young and folded flower,  
Came swinging to my love.

I told her all my secret,  
I told her all my pain.  
She opened all her beauty  
To the sad and sighing rain.

She opened all her beauty,  
Like a young, virgin rose,  
Tenderly, whose petals  
First toward the rain unclosed.



Her eyes were full of pity  
For my sorrow's sake,  
She lifted up her lips.  
Her beauty whispered, "Take—"

And all her joy she gave me,  
And bounteously she gave  
The young joy of her beauty  
With wondering lips and brave.

The sad and the silent secret  
Of her being she laid bare—  
O eagerly I hurried,  
I rushed to meet it there!

And all her beauty's flower  
Fell wasted leaf by leaf,  
The young and the virgin wonder—  
And left me to my grief.

### XIII

#### DAY TO SUNRISE

"You must perish as I kindle,  
You must darken that mine eyes  
May be brightened as yours dwindle,  
You must wane that I may rise.

“You must die to feed my living,  
 From your death my beauty lives,”  
 Life said to the joy of living,  
 Love that takes to love that gives,

The Girl-morning to the Sunrise,  
 The belovèd to her own,  
 “You and you alone must perish  
 At my heart and mine alone.

“All your ardor to my longing  
 You must render up, and waste  
 On my beauty all your being—  
 O belovèd, let us haste!”

#### SUNRISE TO DAY

Cried the Sunrise to the Morning,  
 “Let me render up and spend  
 On your beauty all my ardor,  
 Love and longing to the end.

“O most radiantly lovely,  
 Life for love is light to give,  
 Better in the self belovèd  
 Than ourselves it is to live!

“O dear self to follow after,  
All the life within me throngs  
From my breast to the belovèd’s,  
To the breast where life belongs!

“To your bosom I confide it,  
All the longing, the delight  
That must die to love you wholly.”  
Eastward all the day grew bright.



## VII

# LIBERATION

*"Thy love sets free my spirit  
To the fields of Love afar,  
As the dawn sets free the morning,  
The dusk, the evening-star."*



## I

As the morning-star ecstatic,  
Lost, into the morning moves;  
So my spirit fades forever  
Into the dear self she loves.

As wild rivers pour and perish,  
Fall and flow into the sea;  
So my self runs on with longing  
Toward the self I long to be.

There at last I know my spirit  
Radiantly self-slain, self-lost,  
One with the great self of Beauty,  
Part of all I love the most.

## II

WHEN in your arms I hear it,  
The laboring of your heart,  
All little thoughts desert me,  
All little dreams depart.

On the dear, baffled bosom  
 Love leans with bated breath,  
 To hear the life belovèd  
 Pouring on toward death.

All that all life would utter  
 Out of the lonely Vast,  
 Fugitive, fierce, and holy,  
 Speaks to me there at last.

### III

O BUT to have you entire,  
 To rush, to run to your face,  
 All thoughts of myself to extinguish  
 Forever in your embrace!

To abandon myself completely!  
 At last of myself to be free!  
 Drenched with you, filled with you, full of you;  
 Till drunken and giddily,

Dreaming into your beauty,  
 Through vein and spirit I feel  
 Thrill upward, completely possessive,  
 Your spirit steadily steal!



## IV

WHEN the lightning of desire  
From our limbs has taken flight  
Faint they tremble, as their longing  
Ebbs and mingles in the night.

As the radiant storms of Beauty  
Ever far and farther roll,  
Worn they leave them, the ebb'd wonder  
Worn and weary leaves the soul;

Yet seraphic and exalted,  
As drenched fields the evening-star  
Shines upon when heaven's lyre  
Moans with memories afar.

## V

LET me open to the beauty  
Of your being all my breast,  
Life and longing, soul and body,  
Arms, lips, eyes, and all the rest!

Drink deep draughts in all around me  
Of your beauty, drink and drain  
Deep draughts of yourself around me,  
Love and loveliness and pain!

Give myself to you completely,  
 Wholly and beyond recall—  
 Joy and sorrow, soul and body,  
 Life, and love, and song, and all!

## VI

WHEN our two hearts  
 Rhyme in the dawn,  
 Beyond all Life  
 I am withdrawn.

Beyond all Evil  
 And all Good  
 With you, in a  
 White solitude.

Urging beyond them  
 Breath on breath,  
 Faint follow the feet  
 Of Life and Death.

## VII

FAINT and weary, as from Lethe,  
 Drowned my memories and my pain,  
 From the oblivion of your bosom,  
 From your arms I rise again.

Strange and cool breathes on my forehead  
The first twilight's starry breath;  
Beauty lies fulfilled and perfect,  
And fulfilled are life and death.

From the opiate arms of darkness,  
From the beautiful embrace,  
Lovely, faint, and satiated,  
Morning lifts a dreamless face.

### VIII

As rivers rush in tumult  
And crumble in the sea,  
I am lost, I am slain in you,  
I am drowned eternally.

Yet back in a cloud of joy,  
In a shower of living rain,  
To his heights among the hills  
You pour love back again.

O to the being belovèd,  
To perish and be reborn,—  
The strange and luring presence  
Refreshing as the morn,

Love runs on forever  
As rivers to the sea;  
From myself you set me free!  
From myself you set me free!

## IX

NIGHT and day my youth is longing  
For your loveliness  
That must tame the fiery ardors  
Of his wild excess;

For your beauty to subdue his  
Radiant rage, that dies,  
Drunken down the grave and solemn  
Thirsting of your eyes.

Ah, all pain and longing ended,  
Wearied out, to rest  
Once again at the oblivious  
Lethe of your breast.

See, my youth is all in flower  
(The dread shape draws near)  
That no love but yours may gather—  
And you are not here.

Ah the kindness, once to feel them—  
The dear lips, that crave  
Through our pain, of the great bounty,  
Well, and wild to save.

O once more to meet together,  
Ere the Fates destroy,  
For the rhythmical abandon,  
The barbaric joy!

## X

If to me you prove faithless,  
And to this heart that sings,  
I will stoop and seek your image  
In the universe of things.

Think you within you only  
You have your dwelling place—!  
From field and hill and flower  
Looks out at me your face;

From flowers and from music,  
And from my living song—  
There will I love you still,  
There will I love you long.

## XI

WHEN have I lost myself wholly!  
When at last am I free  
From the barriers of division  
That separate you and me!

When radiant, fierce, and holy,  
With heartbeats running in song,  
To the core of the burning beauty  
From the ends of the world we throng.

In the hush, in the holiness of love,  
In the moment when the mystery is done,  
From the agony of division  
We rise to the joy of one!

## XII

My harbor is gained and the goal of my Song at last,  
The toil and the tumult cease;  
Song steers with sea-dripping wings into silence at  
last  
And the haven of peace.

# VIII

## REVELATION AND REST

*“To bring you the secret of beauty  
The beloved comes from afar—”*





## I

DAY scatters, but the night brings home,  
She gathers in the west  
The everlasting stars, and me  
To the belovèd breast.

## II

DEAR, you are peace—,  
All my wild longings and my sorrows vain  
Faint at your heart,  
All of desire's dim and starry train;  
Self-sacrificed at last,  
Love at your breast sinks radiantly self-slain.

You are the beauty  
Into which longing slowly climbs toward peace  
Through starry pain,—the beauty  
Wherein all longing finds supreme release,  
The still and steady beauty  
Within whose calm all love and longing cease.

The grave of pain  
And all desire's never-wearying length,  
The shore where love  
Breaks like a wasted wave his radiant strength,  
The grave of Song  
And of all singing and all life at length!

My thoughts of you  
Rise with the stars at dusk of every day,  
Till, like the dawn,  
Coming you drown all thoughts of you away;  
Lost in the light of love  
At last, all starry longings fade away.

### III

At the breast belovèd  
All things in the end  
Speak to us a language  
We can comprehend.

At last the pain and terror  
Of life and longing cease,  
The evil and the error  
Dwindle into peace.

All the joy of living,  
 The mystery of breath,  
 Stoop to us like angels—  
 And the face of Death.

## IV

WHEN flushed and disheveled in your arms I lie  
 In the hush of death, as once in the hush of love,  
 No pity my lips would crave of yours as they die—  
 Give me the old, sweet, wanton touch of their love!

## V

ALL your life's adventure—  
 Joy and hate and love,  
 Are but moving shadows,  
 Hints of the Above.

But as signs to guide you  
 Onward toward the goal,  
 All the outer actions  
 Whirled before the soul.

All that you have suffered,  
 All that you have gained,  
 Are as symbols sent you  
 From the Unattained.

Friend, and foe, and lover  
Lying at your heart,  
Speak to you the message,  
Greet you, and depart.

Still the Never-changing,  
Still the most Supreme  
Sends you them as prophets,  
Voices in a dream.

## VI

I HAVE found peace at last,  
Not in the desert wide,  
Nor on the hills of dream  
With Ecstasy to bride.

But peace within your arms,  
When all is said and done,  
When Beauty's hands are folded  
And the race of Joy is run.

## VII

FROM the most belovèd  
All things take their worth,  
Sun and moon, and flowers  
In the fields of earth,

The morning and the evening,  
 And the starry way;  
 That they both may have her  
 Night gives place to day.

She is all the freshness  
 That makes the morning young,  
 She, herself, the poem is  
 That back to her is sung,

She, herself, the bounty  
 That dies for her and lives:  
*She* is the belovèd,  
*She*, the love that gives!

### VIII

As a fallen angel, banished  
 From some paradise, might yearn  
 For return, ah, most belovèd,  
 To yourself I seek return!

To the woman's heart forever,  
 Where we all at first had rest,  
 Love leads back the soul forever  
 Through the most belovèd breast.

## IX

LIKE a forest is your being,  
Virginal, and vast within,  
Through the secrets of her shadow  
Difficult it is to win.

To the inmost core of silence,  
Beautiful and undefiled,  
Inarticulate with mystery,  
Most elusive, shy, and wild.

To the stranger on her borders  
The deep hush by night and day  
Is a terror to repel him;  
But who once has found the way,

Wholly of all else forgetful  
In the arches of her love,  
Only hears the great winds moaning  
Ever through the boughs above.

## X

As natural as breathing  
It is to love you, sweet,  
Familiar as the morning,  
Or the flowers at our feet.

O as the air, forever  
Drawn in and out with pain,  
I let you go forever  
To take you back again!

## XI

WHEN for the last time at your breast  
My heart has lain,  
When the days of the great delight are over,  
The days of pain,

When the old rapture, like the Spring,  
For the last time  
Has left us, the wild will and wanton joy  
Of hearts that rhyme;

Ah though no more, as in nights before  
With the stars above,  
Our hearts may meet with the old beat  
Of life and love,

I will turn to you, as the long light that turns  
From the sunset with a sigh!  
O most beloved, as the long light that turns  
Homeward, before he die!

## XII

THE lips you lean to in loving,  
And the heart you bend above,  
Are but as symbols sent you  
Of the eternal Love.

## XIII

O WHEN at last in the silence,  
Breathless, and face to face,  
When our two pulses kindle  
Along the fiery race

Fear, ignorance, and sorrow  
Fall like a veil away;  
Again life's infinite kindness  
Dawns on me like the day!

Glorious, actual, holy,  
Of all mean fears bereaved,  
And simple as the sunlight—  
But hard to be believed!

## XIV

STILL the most beloved  
Comes from the Unknown  
With a higher message  
Than herself alone.



From Beyond they sent her  
To your heart, to tell  
Something of the secret,  
She, a parable.

In the midnight silence  
Of the summer night  
When the world is sleeping  
And the stars are bright,

For a little hour  
At your heart alone  
She repeats the message—  
Greets you, and is gone.

## XV

Ever again we turn,  
Like banished men and banned,  
Back to the land of love—  
Back to the mother land.

## XVI

To live, to breathe, to love,  
Is a miracle strange and good,  
Familiar as the sunlight,  
But not to be understood.

I cannot understand it,  
Though I touch your hand,  
Though at your heart I lie—  
I cannot understand.

## XVII

IN the moment of death, as in a dream,  
Bow down your heart upon me from above,  
Your lips as you used to do;  
That the moment of death may seem  
To come, even as once the moment of love,  
From you, dear, at least from you!

## XVIII

To bring you the secret of beauty  
The belovèd comes from afar,  
Her love falls into your heart  
Like the light of the evening-star.

More than herself she brings you,  
—A symbol, a breath from beyond,  
A message heard of the secret  
That broods in the most Profound.

O in the night, in the night,  
Lying without a word  
Heart against silent heart,  
How many a time is it heard!

## XIX

MANIFOLD is my love  
Beyond all other souls,  
The immortal flame she wakes,  
The weariness controls;  
Like Music she arouses,  
Like Silence she consoles.

## XX

IN the self belovèd  
Song and speech at last  
Close with tired longing,  
All their sorrows passed.

Weariness seraphic  
Of supreme release  
Folds them into silence  
And eternal peace.

Gained the utmost harbor  
And the farthest goal,  
Life and death and duty  
Dawn upon the soul,

As on seas at sunset,  
Stormed from shore to shore,  
The effortless, high Beauties  
Rise forevermore.

## IX

### TALISMANS: SECRETS AND DELIVERANCES

*"I am a kind of parrot—what the Eternal says, I,  
stammering, say again."*



## I

LIFE burns us up like fire  
 And Song goes up in flame.  
 The body returns in ashes  
 To the ashes whence it came.

Out of things it rises,  
 And laughs, and loves, and sings;  
 Backward it subsides  
 Into the char of things.

Yet soars a voice above it—  
 Love is holy and strong—  
 The best of us forever  
 Escapes in Love and Song!

## II

DAY with stormy love assails the heart of the Night,  
 So the loving heart storms the beloved heart;  
 But at dusk he surrenders patiently all his pain,  
 So to the loved one at last love gives his longing  
 away.

## III

WHY do I lift my voice  
Drunken as though with wine?  
Because I have discovered  
That everything is divine.

What we seek, we find—  
Seem it or near, or far:  
Because I have discovered  
That what we seek, we are.

Joy and Beauty and Love  
Never the heart may fly,  
Whether it would, or no,  
Whether it live, or die.

Though Beauty I follow all day,  
Vainly, in fugitive gleams;  
Relaxed at night and at rest,  
I sink to Beauty in dreams.

Though seeking Love we lose it  
And inwardly wound the breast;  
Defeated at last and dumb  
On the bosom of Love we rest.

The high, the effortless Beauties  
Are over us and beneath,  
We rise to them through life,  
Or sink to them through death.



## IV

Now the immortal peacock  
Above our dreaming heads  
The star-eyed, veering train  
Of sumptuous darkness spreads.

Now a foamed wake in heaven  
The sun's keel leaves behind  
Of stars, and phosphorous splendors,  
And memories in the mind.

## V

WHAT birth with slow labor  
Makes way in the breast  
Of the ominous sunset,  
The wrath of the west!

On the borders of twilight,  
The cloud-wrack afar,  
Black hangs the storm;  
Breathless, a star

Released slips aloft:  
O a soul through the veil  
Newly passed, a new soul—  
Hail!—Hail!

## VI

THE insolent lips of the East,  
 Luxuriant and proud,  
 Leaned over the shroud of Song—  
 Song arose from his shroud,

Lured by the lithe and laughing  
 Sweet mouth that o'er him bent,  
 The insolent and seductive  
 Lips of the Orient.

## VII

SUNRISE cries out to Day and Morning murmurs to  
 Noon,  
 "O to be wearied out at the belovèd lips!"  
 "Blessed from her is the pain, and the weariness from  
 her  
 Dearer than all glad things," Twilight whispers  
 to Night.

## VIII

THE belovèd about herself  
 Creates new loveliness,  
 Her being overflows  
 Into beauty for sheer excess.

As a flower her delicate perfume,  
 Her loveliness sets free  
 All loveliness around her  
 Through the gates of ecstasy.

Song and life and courage,  
 And all glad things that are,  
 Kindle about her beauty,  
 As the light about a star.

## IX

ALL your love is a prophet  
 Of what you yet shall be,  
 A hint to your spirit, a summons  
 Out of Eternity.

## X

"WHERE is the heart of hell?  
 What is heaven, and where?"  
 He who loves in hell  
 Already heaven is there.

"Yet God I cannot love!  
 Weak are the eyes and dim—"  
 Love whatever you will  
 And you are loving Him.

## XI

As a pool repeats in shadow  
The bright shapes upon the shore  
For sheer love, as rhyme forever  
The sweet rhyme that went before;

As a mother in her children  
Memories of her lover's face  
Echoes, for sheer love,—the beauty,  
Mingled, of their first embrace;

Look, and in my song reflected  
See yourself forevermore,  
In my soul's first child the traces  
Of the life your beauty bore!

## XII

WHEREVER the spirit moves,  
Or sorrowful, or strong,  
Through the cycles of life and death,  
The myriad years along,  
A foaming wake she leaves  
Behind her of bright Song.

## XIII

LONGING is beauty unattained,  
Beauty that strains and strives to be,  
Slowly she climbs through starry pain  
To Beauty's calm serenity.

The lover through the belovèd self,  
The flower that bursts toward the light above,  
Toward Beauty through dim sorrow grope,  
Through loving, and the ways of love.

Carven in stone, or veiled in sound,  
The one deep longing of the soul,  
Or flowering slowly into speech,  
Moves ever upward toward one goal.

There where all love is laid at rest,  
There where all songs and ardors cease,  
Longing is lost in the beloved,  
And beauty's thirst in Beauty's peace.

## XIV

LIFE banishes me from Beauty  
A little here beneath,  
A little, but not long:  
I return through Love,

I return through Death,  
Backward with each breath  
I return through Song.

## XV

Two splendors are there the meanest soul  
May never escape, or love, or loth—  
Love that is holy and Death that is holy:  
Thank God on your knees for both.

The beauties supreme are inevitable;  
Not Death may you fly on the farthest star,  
Nor Love, though you wander the universe,  
World by dim world, afar.

## XVI

DARKNESS that dies that Day may live, and Daylight  
that slowly,  
Tenderly, dies away at the dear touch of Dusk,  
Lovers insatiable, each at the breast of the other  
Ever again is slain, ever again reborn.

## XVII

As far as heaven from earth,  
As far as the east from the west,  
So far is the breast that loves  
From the belovèd breast.

For to be loved is well,  
But blessed it is to love;  
Earth it is that receives,  
Heaven showers it from above.

## XVIII

In the universe about us,  
Around us on each side,  
Into Beauty we step,  
Whichever way we stride.

At the extreme of sorrow  
Brood her ecstasies,  
And at the heart of rapture  
The thrilling sorrow lies.

Whatever direction you follow,  
Pursued to the end, at last  
To the marge you come of the boundless  
Encircling Beauty and vast.

Through love, or wine, or music,  
 Flung wide for a flash the door,  
 By the ecstasy you are blinded  
 That is 'round you evermore.

It is in you and about you,  
 Dig downwards, or ascend,  
 Before you at the beginning,  
 And after you at the end.

## XIX

Love, like an aura, clings about the belovèd,  
 Love, like a cloud, arises from the belovèd,  
 And sheds herself back on her source in song,  
 Back on her source in a shower of singing rain.

## XX

DEATH cleanses us from life  
 And bathes the single soul  
 White of her separate self,  
 Drenched in the quickening Whole.

Then, generous at last,  
 We lose ourselves for the sake  
 Of lending life to all—,  
 In others we awake.



And yet as here, so there  
 In the realms beyond the eye,  
 In what we have wholly loved  
 We live, and cannot die.

Though yourself be destroyed,  
 As much as you loved so much  
 Your self shall be again:—  
 Beauty has need of such.

## XXI

THE world would prison us in: only the heart beloved,  
 Liberal, glad, and well, opens the arms of joy.

## XXII

BEAUTY, so old and familiar,  
 Comes still with a vast surprise;  
 Strange seem ever the roses  
 And you to the sight of mine eyes.

## XXIII

IT is ever Spring among the stars  
 That flower always in soft heaven,  
 Nor winter folds up with the flowers  
 The wide eyes of the starry Seven.

Yet even them the quiet hand  
Of day folds up in heaven above;  
But death, nor winter, night, nor day,  
The strange and starry eyes of Love.

## XXIV

LIVE your life to the full,  
The cup of existence drain  
Deep to the very dregs,  
Joy and sorrow and pain!

And shed your spirit freely  
Through love and song and deeds,—  
So, bounteous, gladly giving,  
Deathward the spirit bleeds.

## XXV

WHEN the primitive bounty  
And kindness enfold it,  
When the lips of Love touch,  
And the arms of Love hold it,  
The soul knows at last  
What the ages have told it.

## XXVI

MAN's desire for Beauty,  
The beautiful body and face,  
Is the longing of Life to be born  
Again from some beautiful place.

Beauty is vital and holy,  
By secret and steady laws  
Unto herself the future  
Life of the world she draws.

The eternal and uncreated  
Progressive Vigors to-be  
Cluster about her being  
To quicken and set them free.

And therefore the challenge of Love  
Is incontrovertible still,  
Who bears in her rhythmical body  
The forward and vigorous will.

## XXVII

"THE light is so beautiful let her go naked," said God.  
But the earth in terror bound her,  
And, afraid of her naked loveliness, the robe  
Of colors laid around her.

## XXVIII

Love and Beauty encompass you  
'Round about forevermore,  
Life is but their dwelling-place,  
And death to them is but the door.

Nor can you escape them though you would,  
Yea—be your spirit ever so fleet,  
Though through the darkest door she run,  
More swiftly after follow the feet.

Though from Love you turn away,  
To the ends of the earth will follow Love,  
Though from Beauty you hide your eyes,  
She bends to lift you from above.

Just, or unjust, to them you sink  
At night in dreams upon your bed,  
Over you with the stars they rise,  
And reach beneath you where you tread.

## XXIX

THINK you that any Fire  
Is lost with the ebbing flame!  
To the choral, clustering Radiance  
It ebbs, from whence it came.

Part you are of the Beauty  
 No single death may smother,  
 Put out in one place,  
 You leap up in another.

## XXX

A CHILD is a living love-song,  
 The poem, ecstatic and bright,  
 Of the rapture of man and woman,  
 The memory of their delight:  
 The voice of their blended longing,  
 In his loveliness laid at rest,  
 Made one at last in his bosom,  
 And slain in the peace of his breast.

## XXXI

WHENEVER two lovers meet  
 A new star in heaven is lit—  
 Heaven is the banner of love,  
 And night the memory of it.  
 The joyous embrace of love  
 Calls a new soul from its sphere;  
 At the music of two hearts beating  
 God leans down to hear.

## XXXII

You must find an angel  
To enter Paradise:  
Heaven is only seen  
Through another's eyes.

'Tis another bosom  
Holds the key thereof.  
Through the hearts that love us  
Alone we enter Love.

## XXXIII

THOUGH the source of life and the secret  
Be found at last at her lips,  
Not wholly the star of longing  
The belovèd brows eclipse.

Even against her bosom,  
Even at the heart most dear,  
There cries a voice in the midnight,  
"Beyond—, it is not here!"

O the veil that sunders spirits,  
The secret not to be known!  
Lonely at her breast,  
Even in the end alone,

Breast to breast to the stars,  
 Breast to breast in the dawn,  
 Baffled returns the soul  
 Into herself withdrawn.

## XXXIV

Liquid is the west,  
 Cold, crossed with cloudy veins,  
 Widened, lucid with light—,  
 Where the clear sunset wanes.

So, too, the spirit widens  
 When the long day makes end  
 Of love; a myriad stars  
 And memories reascend.

## XXXV

"SWEET, I love you," the Dawn cries to the heart of  
 Dusk.  
 Noon with, "I love you, I love you," kisses Morning  
 away.  
 Wearily Dusk to Darkness whispers, "I love, I love,"  
 Till with a cry, "O, I love you!" Twilight flows  
 into Night.

## XXXVI

PRESS through joy and pain,  
Press with every breath  
To new forms beyond,  
Press through life and death!

Onward, ever on,  
New life, new love to find—  
Perish, and become,  
And leave the corpse behind!

## XXXVII

BEAUTY alone of all  
Is effortless, free from toil,  
If starry she rise in heaven,  
Or flowering from the soil.

No labor of yours may attain her,  
Be it so dutiful;  
Trusting to the Spring,  
The roses are beautiful.

## XXXVIII

ALL things make way for the soul  
To clear her flight through the Vast,  
And fall from her naked joy,—  
Even the body at last.



## XXXIX

PAST wood and waste and valley,  
Over mountain and wave,  
Song returns to your breast,  
His cradle and his grave.

Run the completed circuit,  
The orbit of Beauty run,  
Fulfilled the perfect circle  
Through the many back to one,

To his sunset in your bosom  
Backward his voices throng,  
To the wellhead of all Beauty,  
The sunrise of all Song.

## XL

EVEN as Day to Sunrise, even as Dusk to Darkness  
Runs to kiss it with love and jubilation of joy,  
Sweet, at the touch of your lips, vehemently affirming  
So my love to your love runs, answering "Yes!"

## XLI

IN the west of the heaven's rim  
The sunset flowers bright—,  
The reflection of all men's love  
Makes there a glowing light.

O Life and Death are joyous!  
Life and Death are high!  
Let me love and live—,  
Let me love and die:

But to new service of you,  
New love in the worlds afar,  
Death sets free the soul,  
As dusk the evening-star.

## X

### LOCKS OF THE WORD-BRIDE

*"No one has unveiled thoughts like Hafiz, since the locks of the Word-bride were first curled."*

HAFIZ.



## I

My soul released from my body  
And the panic of things that are,  
In my song, my very spirit,  
Mounts heavenward like a star.

## II

BECAUSE in the hour of the morning-star  
I needs must lie awake,  
I take the hour of the morning-star  
To sing in, for her sake.

Then, when the brows of the dawn are pale  
And the mouth of the morning meek,  
The young day-star hangs sweetly there,  
Like the mole upon her cheek.

In the half-light, 'twixt night and light,  
These dreams of her I make,  
Ere all the heaven of all the light  
Kiss all my love awake.

## III

Of one attire about the Bride,  
The white, veiled Bride of Song,  
Sweet rhymes come clustering side by side,  
Like virgins in a throng.

## IV

SONG but catches in glimpses  
What fain she would understand—  
A wink of the eyelids of Beauty,  
A flash of the wave of her hand.

## V

YOUR soul was like a big and heavy cloud,  
Radiant with lightnings of extreme delight,  
That died to shed itself on us in song,  
Falling like healing rain from heaven's height.

Your soul was like a big and brimming cloud,  
Radiant with lightnings, dark with unshed showers,  
That died to shed itself in healing song,  
Soft as soft rain, upon love's fading flowers.

Out of the cloud of your strength you shed your song  
With lifted lightnings of extreme delight,  
Like healing rain upon us, that at dusk  
Falls soft and silently from heaven's height.

## VI

Love is a fallen angel  
That seeks to atone for his wrong,  
And storm his original heaven,  
Your heart—, in a shower of song.

## VII

In my song my love is prisoned  
As a bird within a cage.  
Your lips only may unlock him  
From the prison of the page.

If you hear within his singing,  
With your lips you may unbar  
The gold gate that shines between you,  
As the twilight frees her star

That the day but reimprisons:  
—He will seek another cage,  
In your heart, dear, in your breast, dear,  
Fluttering upward from the page.

## VIII

LIKE a bridal-chamber darkened  
In the noon-tide blaze of day,  
My mind, where the white dreams mingle,  
Shuts the whole world away.

## IX

NOT with my body shall I die,  
But to new fields withdrawn  
Of love and singing, lost I move  
Beyond the fields of dawn,  
Beyond the borderland of twilight,  
Beyond the sunset's breath—  
The violet reach from heaven to heaven,  
In the sweet sea of death.  
Look—from the evening's lucid forehead,  
The wide, clear wastes afar,  
I rise, I shine, I beam upon you,  
Seraphical, a star!

## X

IN the cold, white sleep of Beauty  
Frozen, your thought must stand—  
Would it escape Corruption  
And the dim Hunger's hand.



## XI

Look in my songs and you shall find her,  
Though from my lips a name so dear  
Be uttered never, lost forever—  
Lean with your heart, and listen here.

For words too sweet, for speech too holy—  
Lean to my song and listen well;  
Here as the heart's blood in the heart-beat,  
Here as the sea's self in the shell,

Though from my loving vanished, vanished,  
Deep in my song it slumbers, deep,  
Like the one thought, all day close-guarded,  
Betrayed by passionate lips in sleep.

## XII

My love to me is a parable  
On earth, of heavenly things—  
And unto her in parables  
My mouth in the morning sings.

## XIII

As a chemist, by the inward  
Motion of some thought's endeavor,  
Frees the outer force that carries  
All men on with it forever;

In your song set free some secret  
 Of the soul, whose liberation  
 Shoots wide rays of love around it,  
 Vibrant through the whole Creation.

In a single word dynamic  
 Lurks more strength than all earth's horses  
 Lashed, to bear all men together  
 On to the eternal Sources.

#### XIV

To the source of all singing  
 My memories throng,  
 My lips to your lips  
 To fetch a new song.

#### XV

If too freely of Love  
 Free songs I have sung you say—  
 Will you condemn it a fault  
 And turn your face away?  
 Will you condemn it a fault  
 And hold the singing a sin?  
 Not as I would I sang,  
 But as the Angel within.

Holy is he, but words  
 Are weak for his loveliness:  
 Then the singer you may reprove,  
 But the singing you cannot repress.

But if the Angel himself  
 You darken and despise,  
 He will stab you dead with love  
 And the sweetness of his eyes!

## XVI

LEAN with your spirit, and listen  
 To my spirit here moving along—,  
 The forward step of her rapture  
 In the stride of ecstatic Song!

## XVII

AH beloved, the songs that flourished  
 Flowerlike, when plucked and pressed  
 Close against your breathing bosom,  
 Faint, and perish like the rest.

Though your tears of tender pity  
 Fall upon them like the dew,  
 At the source of love Love trembles,  
 Fainting like the flowers, too.

## XVIII

ON the dim border-lands of speech  
And silence melting each in each  
Life sinks with shuddering breath—  
Already about the heart there steals  
The inarticulacy that seals  
The hush of love and death.

In the rapture of Beauty beyond reach,  
The immortal silence beyond speech,  
Song, at the burning core  
Of the heart of Love where love is dumb,  
At the source of Song where no songs come,  
Closes forevermore.

## XIX

ON the last marge of Love's advance  
In this song I dance a dance!

Fulfilled of the last ecstasy,  
Love at last has set me free.

Love lures me on along the wind,  
Life and death I leave behind.

I press into the core of things  
Beyond the sunset's folded wings.

I whirl my hair in the sunset cloud.  
I clap my hands! I shout aloud!

O the last rapture baffles speech,  
It bears me on beyond your reach!

I love you, and I greet you here.  
I whirl! I fade! I disappear!

## XX

O ALL sweet women the whole world over,  
Listen and lean to the songs I sing  
Of the woman I love! Let every lover  
The whole world over answer and sing!

## XXI

LET me press into the utmost  
Marge of mysteries that bound me—,  
Make wide spaces clear for breathing  
In the universe around me.

More as knowledge is made way for,  
Wide the way for light and clearer—,  
Love and courage wake forever  
As the Actual draws nearer.

As a horseman in the midnight  
 Phantoms 'tis we fear behind us;  
 Truth reveals forever beauty—,  
 And the Actual shall unbind us.

Till I slip the robe of matter,  
 Naked, buoyant, up the ocean  
 Of clear beauty I am lifted,  
 Without magic, without motion;

Till I float amid the regions  
 Of the Endless, till I follow  
 Upward with harmonious motion  
 Through the heights and heavens hollow.

O the ecstasy, the rapture  
 Baffles speech! I float above you  
 Lost; I whirl, I fade, I flicker,  
 Showering back a last, "I love you!"

## XXII

I SHAKE my hair in the wind of morning  
 For the joy within me that knows no bounds,  
 I echo backward the vibrant beauty  
 Wherewith heaven's hollow lute resounds.

I shed my song on the feet of all men,  
On the feet of all shed out like wine,  
On the whole and the hurt I shed my bounty,  
The beauty within me that is not mine.

Turn not away from my song, nor scorn me,  
Who bear the secret that holds the sky  
And the stars together, but know within me  
There speaks another more wise than I.

Nor spurn me here from your heart, to hate me!  
Yet hate me here if you will—not so  
Myself you hate, but the Love within me  
That loves you, whether you would or no.

Here love returns with love to the lover,  
And beauty unto the heart thereof,  
And hatred unto the heart of the hater,  
Whether he would or no, with love!





## OTHER POEMS



## RETURN TO NEW YORK

FAR and free o'er the lifting sea, the lapsing wastes  
and the waves that roam,  
Hour by hour with sleepless power the keel has fur-  
rowed the soft, sad foam;  
Slowly now, with steadier prow, she steals through the  
dim gray fog-banks home.

Faint and far from across the bar the first lines burn  
of the cloudy day,  
From whistle and horn in the twilit morn low mur-  
murs are wafted across the bay.  
The fleet, sweet swing of the sea-bird's wing beats  
down the darkness and dies away.

Dawn,—and lo, as the drifted snow that melts from  
the sun on a mountain height,  
As the veils from a bride that fall and divide, the fog-  
veils sunder and leave in sight,  
Like Venice, dim on the water's rim, the city, my  
mother, bared and bright.

In the first hours her stately towers and clustered  
summits show faint and fair:

Mother, mother, to thee and none other the heart cries  
out in the morning there!

Solemnly, slowly, the white mists wholly fade, and the  
whole, sweet form lies bare.

Hail, all hail, with the dawn for veil, the sea for  
throne, and the stars for crown!

Mother, thy son, his journeying done, triumphantly  
here at thine heart bows down;

Love that sings, on the sea-wind's wings runs on to  
greet thee his very own.

## DUSK

Now from the sea-deep, cloudless rifts of blue,  
Like big, reproachful eyes brimming with tears,  
The liquid stars of heaven peering through  
Blink drowsily into the gulf of years.

Under the shimmering reaches waste and wide  
The dizzy soul reels dreamingly along,  
A somber breath blows through the heavy Void  
Twilight and stars and drunkenness of song.

Above the peacock-colored twilight's green,  
Cloud beyond cloud, the immortal Beauty broods  
Amid the radiant rapture and serene  
Of the ethereal, starry solitudes.

Child, lift thy voice to Her, and let thine heart

Pour its desire before Her shining throne,  
Where in the holy heaven She sits apart  
Above the dust and din of worlds unknown.

Sing—fill thy bosom with the starry wine,  
Forget thyself in the huge self of Night;  
So shall Her voice descending into thine  
Make thee afraid of thine own vast delight.

Till thou art drunk with the divine and deathless  
And swallowed up amid the radiant throng —  
And all the choirs of heaven within thee breathless  
Shall drown thee in the depths of thine own song!

## SONG

Out of my sorrow I have made this song,  
To comfort whom it will:  
She whom I love answered my love with hate,  
But love she could not kill.

And now I know, I sing it ten times over;  
Though to be loved be well,  
More gladness than looks down with Hate from heaven  
Looks up with Love from hell!

## TOLSTOI

As water unto water calls and cries  
    Over the wide wastes and the fields of sea,  
    As the long lapsing floors that tremulously  
From land-line unto land-line fall and rise,  
So the dark ocean of thought's eternities  
    Rolls round the soul, that ever longs to see  
    Beyond the circle of flat Immensity,  
From star to opposite star of the dumb skies.

No sound of horn, or gong, or whistle crying  
    On the untrodden spaces sounds afar,  
    Around all men the immeasurable waters roll;  
Yet there be some who wind and wave defying,  
    Battling the brine, toward the new worlds that are  
    Jut forth like crags, the headlands of the soul.

## TO THE VIRGIN

O THOU fairest of women, thou loveliest among earth's  
    daughters!  
Thy hair lies simple and low  
    Over thy sad brows and lowly,  
Thy mouth is pallid for pride, yea, and thine eyes  
    are holy:  
    Over their shadows move  
    The wings of the spirit of Love,

As the spirit of God first brooded over the face of the  
     waters,  
 Solemnly, long ago.  
 O thou fairest of women, thou loveliest among earth's  
     daughters!

## PALINGENESIS

WHEN the galley of my soul went out on the unknown  
     seas  
 I revisited in a dream all the old things I had known,  
 Moving on the moving waters that moved about me  
     alone  
 With a motion other than about the Orkneys or the  
     Hebrides,  
 With a sound of the silence of the moving seas.  
  
 And out of the tangle of old loves, old dreams, and  
     old faces,  
 And old pangs,—out of the earthly days that had  
     been,—  
 Some faint memories stirred me calling from within,  
 And the sound of the rustling sea beating upon the  
     old places,  
 With a softly shifting sound over the deep spaces.  
  
 And the sound of the moving of the waters was un-  
     broken by any tears,  
 Neither was there any laughter within the Void,

But the cold heavens lay above me, starry and wide;  
 And I remembered the passionate eyes and arms of the  
     old years,  
 And the fierce subtlety of their pains and their fears.

And I revisited the sunset islands that I had lost at  
     birth  
 And the strange face that had lured me beyond the  
     seas;  
 And when I had seen I set sail with a favoring  
     breeze.  
 I turned. Body and spirit kissed. I shouted with  
     mirth,  
 "I am part of thee, I am part of thee, O earth!"

## RETURN

### I

'Twas May; a cock from the warm hill-side crowing  
     Shattered the morning like a crystal glass,  
 A soft, wet wind bowed down the meadow-grass,  
 Bearing faint sounds of toil and distant lowing,

When I, beside the river's swollen flowing,  
     With feet for two long weary years alas  
 Through these dear, homely haunts unwont to pass,  
 Over the lonely meadow-lands was going.



O mother-land! When once again I trod  
Thy fields and felt thy warm winds over me,  
First strode I forward buoyant as a god,  
Drunken with thee and passionate love of thee;  
Then sank I down humiliate to the sod,  
Remembering all I had been and failed to be.

## II

Much had I wasted many fated hours,  
Homesick and heavy homeward I returned,  
About me all the regardless beauty burned  
Of May-time in the blossoms and the bowers;

The mother-land with all her towns and towers  
Recked not of me, nor greeted me, nor spurned,  
Not the compassionate heart of Spring-time yearned  
Downward to me with all her roots and flowers.

While silent in a fierce and hopeless mood  
I hid my warm face in the fallow earth,  
Regardless Nature all about me stood,  
Tremendous with her passion and her birth;  
And from the meadow and the windy wood  
Came sounds of mating and of singing mirth.

## TO THE DREAMERS

WHO from the noon-tide flame of living flies  
To music and to poetry, which are  
Moonlight reflected from the sun of life—  
The beautiful, pale moonlight that makes fair  
All the sad ugliness and blaze of day;  
Let him take heed, lest in the sweet illusion  
His will grow weak, and the cold loveliness,  
Sleeping upon his forehead, make him mad.

## EARLY APRIL

WITH memories and odors  
The wind is warm and mild.  
The earth is like a mother  
Where leaps the unborn child.

The grackles flock returning  
Like rain-clouds from the south,  
And all the world lies yearning  
Toward summer, mouth to mouth.

How soft the hills and hazy  
Look through the open door.  
The crocus shines, a virgin,  
White from the grassy floor.

The children whirl around in a ring  
 And laugh and sing, and dance and sing;  
     But the blackbird whistles clear,  
             O clear,  
 "The spring, the spring!"

## DEPARTURE

Now your eyes are closed, your lips  
     Parted as in an indrawn breath,  
 The rapture of love upon your face  
     Has set the triumphant peace of death.

So shall you lie at last before  
     Ever again we two embrace;  
 I shall not look on you again,  
     Not even in death upon your face.

So shall you lie at last, at last,  
     When I am far away and fled—  
 One moment, and forever we part—,  
     Already I seem to see you dead.

Your bosom is like a moonlit sea,  
     So calm the heaving of your breath;  
 The rapture of love upon your face  
     Has set the triumphant peace of death.

## THE SAVIORS

WHEN from long wanderings in sensual joys,  
Satiated, weary, we return, and fain,  
How beam the high beauties of eternal Thought  
To take us back again!  
Music and Song, with sweet disdain,  
To the faithless and undeserving,  
Equally to the good and the evil soul  
Their regardless bounties roll:  
Nor from the most obscene  
Beethoven and Shelley hold back their splendors,  
unswerving  
From the high goal  
Which ever they move upwards toward serene,  
From the pinnacles beyond lust  
Showering their glad indifference on the dust.

O the saviors!  
That from the pang of the flesh  
Set free the soul, from the mesh  
Of the ugly and the mean,  
From the littleness of things and low behaviors;  
How beautiful they are,  
Irresistible to be loved!  
And the vast heart of the Sensual how obscene,  
Cruel, not to be moved,  
Wounding the soul with many a galling scar!

Back to the sacred rest  
 Of the Beautiful we fly; O why did we leave her!  
 Till lifted upward slowly,  
 The belovèd voices call:  
 Pierced with her faithlessness, like a sword to cleave  
     her,  
 With a shower of blinding tears the soul awakes,  
 And virgin after all  
 Sobs the soiled heart, and breaks  
 With passionate sorrow on the terrific breast.

Ah, though a thousand times we should betray them,  
 No sin of ours may stay them,  
 Our saviors, from their love;  
 Forward following their feet we move:  
 The blinding light of Beauty  
 Breaks dazzling on the soul but newly risen  
 Out of the sensual prison,  
 Weak, faint, and worn.  
 Love and the infinite sea of Joy and Duty  
 Opens before our eyes,  
 An ocean flooding to the eternities,  
 Inviolable and soundless,  
 Fresh as the Springtime, vigorous as the morn  
 And boundless:  
 Never satiating, never cloying, never  
 Weakening the soul, but still to new endeavor  
 Luring her onward out toward the Unknown forever.

## MID-OCEAN

—HEAVEN's ardent scope over the midnight sea  
Bowed down with reverent stars from rim to rim,  
Bowed slowly down with weight of solemn stars  
From the crowded core to where the last, low wave  
Washes her flames! The while my soul within  
Sits like a star, the central flame of All.

## "MOTHER"

WHEN at your side a little child looks up,  
Remembering whence it came,  
Half-baffled and not knowing what it seeks,  
It whispers the old name.

Not yet it guesses the more radiant joy  
Whither its forces roll,  
The later rapture and more breathless bliss  
Of the united soul.

Yet homesick, banished from the sacred Source,  
Some little memory  
Moves on its spirit—some ecstatic hint  
Of the return to be.

The man shall seek it at another breast;  
Still is the voice the same,—  
Love, Love—O with what hearts we turn,  
Remembering whence we came!

## SEA-VOYAGE

IN the embrace of Dawn, exuberant, fierce, and free,  
The vast and virgin Deep sobs out for sheer delight.  
Noon treads with ponderous strides on the Immensity.  
Darkness from her throne leans down the lips of  
night

To glut the sullen sadness of the immortal sea.

And like a mournful queen, with homage of the throng  
All unappeased, engirdled with jewels row on row,  
She sways, sceptered and robed, saluted with dim song,  
Upon her rhythmic throne sullenly to and fro,  
Cruel and discontent, disconsolate and strong.

Deep between the vistas of evening's twilit Deep  
The forehead of dim heaven with many stars is  
crowned,

The headland of the morning with cloud on cloud hangs  
steep;

The stately, somber waters flow silently around,  
From morning into morning moving, from sleep to  
sleep.

From morning into morning, far as the eye may scan,  
The hungry, herded waves crowd the unending rim.  
Under the huge arch of the infinite heaven's span  
The sea-bird's weary flight beats down the darkness  
dim.

Somberly on the Waste cries out the spirit of Man.

Till the harbor entered and the long peace begun,  
Quiet falls from heaven with the old calm at last.  
The silence flows away in pulses one by one,  
And the unmoving mainland looms shadowy and vast,  
The ceaseless clamor ended and the long journey  
done.

### “ALAS, WHERE THOU ART”

ALAS, where thou art only there is love,  
And where thou goest love with longing goes,  
As moonlight with the moon in heaven above,  
The perfume with the rose.

As murmuring boughs unto the wind that blows,  
And moonlight to the moon that moves above,  
As the sweet odor to the blowing rose,  
So unto thee is love.

Come with thine eyes like stars in heaven above,  
Come with thy face cool as the wind that blows,  
Come to me with the perfume of sweet love,  
O love, my moon, my rose!

### “MUSIC IS HIS ROBE”

THE rhythm of the eternal silence, the voices  
Intangibly interwoven together of all things  
Lapsing and lifting, the oceanic Beauty  
Whose silent waters fold forever flowing



Our world of tumult, the voice of encircling Silence,  
 Music, for a fleet space, with ardor follows,  
 With friction of resonant strife sonorous forcing  
 From the deep bosom and heart with holy fingers  
 (That grasp into the sullen core of Silence)  
 Her rolling voice; with ardor of vibrant friction,  
 Till almost before the soul it shine and sparkle  
 Glistening hues. But the heart fails, the hand wearies,  
 Backward ebbs the stream to the boundless ocean,  
 And the continuous ecstasy to hold longer  
 Baffles the soul; radiance melts into darkness  
 Unto our eyes, and harmony into silence  
 Unto our ears: but underneath is radiance  
 Interminably proceeding, underneath Music,  
 Ere the first note it was, and forever after  
 Proceeds, when the last note has ceased to speak it—,  
 Eternal Music, whereof each audible portion  
 Is but as the crest of a wave that foams for a moment  
 Upon the bosom of the unbounded ocean,  
 Or a remembered dream in a sleep enduring.

'Tis but a visible spot on the robe invisible  
 Of intervolvular harmonies, choral colors  
 Blended and multi-woven, dyed deep in purple,  
 Stained with the night and sumptuous with profusion  
 Of shadow and light—, the very cloth and tissue  
 Which was, and is, and shall be 'round about us,  
 Within us and above us and beneath us—  
 The breathing robe of Beauty worn by Creation.

It is the magnificent garment of the Eternal,  
 Which, somberly and with undulous motion trailing,  
 Billows gigantically behind his footstep  
 Heard as of thunder, with ponderous stride and stately  
 Following as He draws it sadly sweeping  
 Ever around the dumb, waste capes of being,—  
 With a vast sough and whisper oceanic,  
 Withdrawing, and withdrawing, and withdrawing.

The gorgeous hollow thereof is drenched with darkness,  
 Tragic with twilight, peacock-colored, spattered,  
 Solemn with vast excesses of waste shadow  
 And mournful grandeur of iridescent progressions,  
 Starriest tints, and cloudy courts of color,  
 Intricately coördinate. So veering  
 After the footfall of the high Eternal,  
 Slow pacing with pomp of terrifical rhythm forward,  
 Moves the starred train and canopy with a motion  
 Disconsolate, inconsolable with beauty,  
 Vastly disdainful through the Voids forever.

## THE ANSWER

To all the questions of the sages,  
 “What must we do to live?”—that cry,  
 With groan and travail of the ages  
 Creation makes but one reply:  
 “He that is brave alone may live.”  
 This answer all the ages give.

## THE WINDS OF MARCH

MARCH is come with the firstling of joyous days  
All in the strength of his heart, and the snows are  
sad.

The slow, wet winds come warm from the meadow-  
ways

Here, where the Spring is glad.

There was an hour for murmurs and for replies,  
A little hour for sweet love to have his will,  
A little hour there was for songs and sighs;  
But here it is so still.

Ah that she would but come to me now for a space,  
Ah that she would but come to me, now I am sad,  
With the old, careless smile of her pale, pale face,  
Here, where the Spring is glad!

## UNREST

I BEAR within me all the pain of earth,  
And all the melancholy of her plains,  
And all the longing of her lonely hills,  
Sad songs and dreams that drift about the world—

All these I bear, and ever my own mind  
And the wide waste of uncreated thought  
Spreads out before me like the universe,  
Dark and chaotic, strewn with many stars.

## "O MEMORY, THOSE EYES"

O MEMORY, those eyes  
That shine so gravely sad,  
Across the irrevocable sea of things  
Luring me home,

Little they may avail—  
Heart-breaking and austere—  
To lure my bark into the sunset waste  
Of the dead Past!

That childhood-music blown  
Along the horizon's rim,  
Cloud beyond cloud and wave on wave afar,  
Little avails.

Gone, gone, forever gone!  
O in the blind, immense  
Universe, loud with warring worlds, thy  
voice  
O Love, how frail!

So poignant and so dear,  
Lovable above all,  
Breaking the heart for utter helplessness,  
Breaking the heart!

Yet even here I feel  
 A cry fierce and divine  
 Wrung from the heart of man, a bitter cry  
 Shaking the stars.

## THE CLOSE OF MASS

THE holy candles fade and flare,  
 Where the slow priest with swaying tread  
 Moves, and the organ shudders there  
 And the dumb people bow the head:  
 The body of Christ is dead.

Through the long aisles and vaulted gloom  
 Groans the mute common heart of men,  
 Sullen and holy with its doom:  
 On every cross and wall again  
 A Christ is crowned of men.

The jewels and the tiara's rim  
 His carven forehead clasp and span,  
 But they have cramped and humbled Him  
 Into a God, who was a man—,  
 The first since Time began.

His hands hang bleeding on the wall;  
 O the white loin-cloth streaked with red!  
 O the pale body stripped and tall!  
 Yet though you wail these words you said,  
 The body of Christ is dead.

Weep and moan, weep and moan,  
 Body and soul are both of God.  
 Can you keep the soul when the flesh is gone?  
 Shall not the body through flower and clod  
 Strive sunward through the sod!

O common world, O world of men,  
 Have you no answer, are you dumb!  
 Who bore us Christ, and shall again  
 Bear us a Christ when the time is come,—  
 Where is your voice, are you dumb!

They crucified Him when He cried  
 And mocked Him standing underneath;  
 Shall they tear the son from the mother's side!  
 Shall they call Him God with profane breath!  
 Shall they rob a man of death!

They have crowned Him with a fire of light,  
 With all the heavens for His seat,  
 They have made Him awful with might of might:  
 Where are the man's eyes still and sweet?  
 Where are the tired feet?

The silence aches, but through the reeds  
 Of the organ, through choir and arches dim,  
 The echoing world grows loud, and pleads  
 With rough, hard hands and thorny diadem,  
 "Where is my Christ, what have you done to  
 Him?"

## TO A POET IN DESPAIR

SING first, and after break the heavy chain—  
What once we sing we afterwards attain,

Nor seek without you for the inner light—  
Within you lies the fire and the might;

Rebuild it in yourself with fierce endeavor,  
Build up a refuge in yourself forever!

By the outer terrors baffled, but still glorious,  
Into herself the soul returns victorious.

Baffled and wounded on the road she trod,  
Up through herself the soul returns to God.

## BENEDICTION

THE wave of morning rolling o'er the world,  
Dawn, touching the lids of men awake,  
Purge you, and pierce you daily with the will  
To live and love and labor for their sake.

## TO MARY

WITH a multitudinous sound of strings  
And a flame of light,  
With a clashing of spears and fierce unbearable things  
He should have come in His might,

With the uncrowning of many kings:  
O watcher beside a manger, bow down thy face, cover  
thy face in the night!

There was none with Him, there was none like Him,  
there was none before Him  
That was so sweet;  
They shall mock Him, they shall crucify Him, they  
shall abhor Him,  
They shall wound His feet.  
They shall tear Him down, they shall call Him God,  
they shall adore Him:  
O mother beside a dead son, bow down thy face, cover  
thy face in His winding-sheet!

### IN THE NIGHT

NEW loves and new faces  
Have taken your place.  
The years have veiled  
The look of your face.

They lure me and draw me  
Along the new way,  
Glad faces and lovelier,  
Laughing and gay.



Till twilight descends  
And the faces depart:  
I lie alone  
With the ghost at my heart.

In the night, in the night,  
On my bosom I bear  
The dear weary beauty,  
The sleepless despair;

Here on my heart,  
Here on my breast—  
O my sorrow, my own,  
I love you the best!

### THE KEYS

IN the wide hollows of the east the light  
And darkness are embracing. Sound is dead.  
No leaf is stirred. Vast quietness is here,  
The silence of the bridal-chamber, the peace,  
When all the world is banished and forgot,  
After long sorrow, after long disdain,  
In the still mingling of two silent souls.

Around us lies the world of love and death,  
Of bridal joy in the dim-lighted room  
Weary of love, of white and breathless sleep

In other chambers sickened with the air  
 Of flowers and one ever-patient form  
 Triumphant in repose—, chambers of birth  
 And mingling cries and groanings—. Even now  
 Strange men are weaving dreams of love or woe,  
 (On sea-washed islands and strange lands afar,  
 On distant capes and headlands of the world),  
 Music, or song, or colored memories,  
 Reflected moonlight from the sun of life;  
 And all mankind reëchoes but one chord  
 Of love and birth and death: while spirits grave  
 In lonely meditation brood thereon,  
 And answering heads arise in every land,  
 Christs and Mohammeds, Buddhas—names that shine.  
 But at the core of All lurks one old pain,  
 The world-old hungering of woman and man,  
 The inevitable attraction old as Time  
 And stronger than all ages, even now,  
 Amid the horror of huge cities set,  
 They meet and sink, dragging each other down,  
 'Mid reeling sorrows to the dark abyss.

O look at me, we hold the ancient keys  
 Of love and life and death, we are the source  
 Of all of these; since first Creation dawned,  
 Since the first morning of the world, we two  
 Have longed to rush together and crush out  
 The pain of all within each other's arms!

## HYMN

O GLORIOUS Splendor and seraphic Might!

How shall I praise Thee, or how worship Thee!  
High God of dreadful holiness, Thy light  
And breath are on the waters of the sea.

The brain of heaven with her nights and days  
And thunders is for motions of Thy thought,  
Wheeling along the everlasting ways—  
I cry to Thee, but Thou repliest not.

Oft have I covered Thee with bitter hate  
And felt Thy lash upon me from above;  
But anger fades before the face of Fate,  
And holier than to hate it is to love.

And I shall love Thee with my very soul,  
Forever, always, even to the tomb,  
Yea, even though across my body roll  
The whirl-wind of the chariot-wheels of Doom.

## TWILIGHT IN MID-OCEAN

I HEARD the sailors sing at twilight on the Deep,  
Far forward in the dusk. Through the dark,  
clouded dome  
Westward, a few, faint stars awoke like eyes from  
sleep,

And a dim phosphorescence of fire lined the foam,  
Driven along the Waste like flocks of herded sheep.

And ground-swell upon ground-swell echoed with tread  
on tread

The sob all 'round the world of the despondent sea.  
In the half-light I almost awaited, as in dread,

The monster of the Vast, old as eternity,  
Along the implacable rim should lift a snaky head.

I thought of all the ships that with white sail unfurled

Across the somber Waste had sought the immortal dream,

And the adventurous breast prophetic of a world,—  
Islands of promised peace beyond the morning-stream,

Visions, before whose breath the barks of old were whirled.

The sailors' voices sounded far-off as if in sleep;

Along the vast and scornful surface of the sea  
A multitudinous breath of laughter seemed to creep,

And like a long-drawn sigh died fitfully away.  
An oceanic odor arose upon the Deep.

### THE TRUTH

THOUGH the prophets accept their doom and the martyrs sigh for it,

It is better to live for the Truth than it is to die for it.

## TWO SAD SONGS

## I

As the still lamplight of the street  
At noon of night I crossed,  
Afar I saw it wandering  
And like a little ghost—

A little, lonely will-o'-the-wisp,  
Mechanically gay,  
That mimicked some immortal thing  
Along the somber way.

The ghost of some sad love it seemed  
In a forgotten Spring,  
That ever the old gestures made  
As it went wandering.

The secret of the old, lost joy  
Still haunted it and stirred,  
Repeating yet to every face  
The old, familiar word;

And the kind loveliness, that once  
Had bowed to grant such grace,  
Now the immortal bounty begged  
From every passing face.

Nearer it hurried, as in quest  
Of some obsessive goal  
Beyond it ever, or as if  
In search of its own soul,

And nearer drew—until the eyes  
Begged up to mine, and moved  
By me—and O it once had been  
Somebody's best beloved!

## II

Where is he, the cheated one,  
That the world has robbed of you,  
His beloved ere he came,  
And the love he never knew!

The dear secret of your breast  
Meant for him and him alone,  
All that tender loveliness  
Plundered now of everyone!

In the desert of the world  
His sweet spring of life is sealed,  
And the bosom meant for his,  
And the breast that might have healed.

Glimpses of your girlhood's self,  
 Beautiful and fugitive,  
 Show us what consoling grace  
 Once your beauty had to give.

Dear, each gesture, each caress,  
 Ways of loving, every whim  
 Of wild pity, every kiss,  
 Meant for him and only him!

Still about your presence clings,  
 Wistful, sorrowful, and wise,  
 Ever that reproachful ghost—  
 And the haunting of his eyes.

### TRIO

DEATH. Now ebbs the twilight from the melting land,  
 The tremulous light runs low  
 Along the rim of the world. Give me your hand.  
 Come, for it must be so.

LIFE. Weary I am,  
 Yet let me still abide  
 A little while  
 Here, in the eventide.

LOVE [*unseen*] O sweet, on my breast  
 Come once again

Here, as of old!  
 Sweet is the pain.  
 O come as of old!  
 Sweet is the rest—

DEATH. No more.  
 Eternal darkness covers up the west.  
 Come to me as before,  
 Ere into tumult and distraction's pit  
 Your wandering feet were sent  
 Out of the quiet door;  
 Ere you were sent out of the mother-breast.

LOVE. [*nearer*] I give you my lips,  
 Here at my side  
 Abide, abide,  
 Here at my lips!  
 At the breast that bore you,  
 Though born unto pain!  
 Love and forgive!  
 Love leans above you—  
 Give life and live  
 Once, once again!  
 O I love you, I love you!

LIFE. I am fain  
 But mine eyes darken—  
 Whither—?



DEATH. Nay, turn to me who am the rest,  
 Nor heed the siren voice that singing lures,  
 Give heed, nor hearken.  
 Only in me the immortal peace endures.

LOVE [*still nearer*] I am the sunrise,  
 I am the light.  
 Death is the night.  
 Drink of mine eyes!  
 Turn to the light!  
 Though you be weary,  
 Wearier yet  
 You shall grow, nor regret;  
 Here on my bosom  
 Reborn, rearise  
 To new life and new living.  
 Sweet is the pain,  
 Sweet to be slain  
 In the old way again,  
 Living and giving—  
 Can you forget!

LIFE. O Love—

LOVE [*very near*] Warm are my lips  
 And fresh for your tasting,  
 Cold is your body  
 And shadow-wards hasting.  
 Why will you turn thus

From all you desired!  
 Can you not love me!  
 Sweet, are you tired?

Then though to come to me  
 You be too weary,  
 You will I draw to me  
 Though you be weary!  
 Here at the heart-side  
 Clasp and en-arm you,  
 With my own body  
 Kindle and warm you,  
 O my own banished one  
 Here, till again  
 Clean from my clasping,  
 Vigorous, nourished,  
 Strong, you may drink again  
 Ecstasy's pain!  
 You shall, you shall!  
 Though you had perished,  
 Fresh from my lips you should drink it  
 again!

LIFE [*turning fiercely about*]. O the pain  
 Lying against your breast!  
 O let me catch you to my side again  
 Here, nor have ever rest!  
 Here at the heart-side wear you,  
 Love you and bear you,

Weariless spending  
 Joy never-ending  
 At the dear bosom—

DEATH [*advancing*] Nay, 'tis passed forever.  
 Come, for the twilight covers up the west.

LIFE [*hesitates and goes to Death—Darkness*]

Forever?

What silence seems to darken o'er the land!  
 How may I bear it!  
 Let me upon your bosom lean a little,  
 Give me your hand.

LOVE [*the voice recedes*] Sweet, are you weary?

CHORUS OF DESTINIES. Faint on the irrevocable  
 breast  
 Lean, on the somber bosom that cannot understand.  
 Sleep, and have rest.

LOVE [*from afar*] I am the sunrise,  
 I am the light,  
 Death is the night  
 Till the new dawn rise.  
 Though you have left me,  
 Love will not leave you;  
 Love will receive you,

Love will retrieve you  
In the new sunrise!  
Sleep, and have rest.

## REBELLION

BEYOND the sea lies another, and yet beyond,  
I know the sea is not bound by a measured space,  
I will reach out my arms over the sea,  
I will run, I will run, till I come to the perfect place.

When I hear a dancing on the dim sands beyond the  
moon,  
And the fawning waves cry out, I grow fierce and  
wild—  
I remember something I have lost shining and strange,  
And beat against the patient gods like a little child.

## WOMAN, THE MYSTICAL

WHERE is She and who is She  
Whom across the wavering world  
Like a beacon-light I see?

In the words that shine and move  
Down some poet's woven page  
I have felt Her hate and love.

When the vampire in the night  
Wets her lips with sleepy blood,  
On Her lips the blood is bright.

The cold angel at God's throne,  
Blowing trumps of molten gold,  
Speaks of Her and Her alone.

The poor harlot in the street  
When the gaudy arc-lights flare—  
There Her pulses burn and beat.

Turning vile things to the Human,  
To the Human, the Divine—  
Angel, anti-Christ, and Woman!

## AUTUMN

LET the tired sea go down with a hurt sound,  
It cannot reach us here where the gray dunes are  
still;

The cold wind sweeps the bushes on the hill,  
The white sand whirls across the barren ground,  
And the sea moans as in my childhood.

When the wind is on the dunes where the long dunes  
roll

Seaward, the old summers come back to me in song,  
I have seen these reaches and sandy ways so long

They are almost grown a part of the breathing of my  
soul:

And the sea moans as in my childhood.

I love to sit and watch you when the sea is sad,  
And when you look and smile the mother smiles  
in you,

But when you turn with love it is something strange  
and new,

Tired and wonderful, that almost makes me glad;

And the sea moans as in my childhood.

### THE WIND OF TIME

THE winds blow out of the stars and trample and  
pass,

The night grows black and silent deep in my heart,  
Here where I roam between the stars and the grass.

O piteous love, the years have conquered, alas!

The winds rise up and blow you out of my heart.  
The winds blow out of the stars and trample and pass.

### THE BORDERLANDS

IN extreme sorrow, on the border-lands of death  
(As extreme joy, on the border-lands of death),  
On the utter marge of being and end of all,  
At the last pang—there lurks an ecstasy,

An abandoned beauty so thrilling, fierce, and sheer,  
 So regal is her splendor and gorgeous grief  
 And all the rhythm of reverent agony;  
 That toward the face, ineffable and austere,  
 Disdainful, august, and perfect beyond all Time,  
 Swiftly we turn, and scornful of all else,  
 Rapturous, shuddering, on the magnificent breast  
 Lean as forever, never to depart!

Then draws the spirit nearer to her Source,  
 At the one extreme as at the other extreme—  
 Ecstasy—agony—for both are one  
 And lead us back into the home of things  
 Forever holy and forever new.

## BEETHOVEN

BEAUTY here is seen at rest in the peace thereof,  
 Love that bending down looks back on the pain of  
     Love,  
 Sorrow smiling on herself from the heights above.

## TO A DEAD GIRL

ALTHOUGH your feet gone deeply in the dust  
     Wounded the breasts of Beauty with dull pain,  
     Although your spirit bore the outer stain  
 Of things unlovely, and the inner rust;

Beyond all anger, and beyond all lust,  
 The eternal Beauty harbors no disdain,—  
 Sorrowful to her bosom's peace again  
 She takes them back, the just and the unjust.

Nay, even as a star that from the red  
 Ruin of sunset rises pure and bright  
 Into the holy host of heaven's dome,  
 So, too, your soul, arising from the dead,  
 Pants upward with her own immaculate light,  
 Virgin returns to the eternal home.

### BEAUTY TO HER LOVER

ART thou hungry, O my child, O my child, art thou fain  
 for beauty,  
 For sad beauty that passes like a gleam!  
 Is thy life barred about with duty and barren duty,  
 Art thou as one crying out of the maze of things  
 that seem  
 In a half-dream, between a dream and a dream!  
 Have a care, have a care to thy voice, have a care to  
 thy crying,  
 Lest I draw thee back into the web of things;  
 Lest I smite thy mouth with sleep, that it should be  
 sighing,  
 Lest I fold thee against my heart where the blood  
 sings,  
 After thy wanderings, after thy long wanderings!



## DUMBNESS

WITHIN my heart, half little child, half angel,  
A spirit sat and sang for sheer delight,  
When darkness lapped my spirit 'round his rapture  
Rose in me radiant, like a star at night.

Angel of Song—my master and mine only,  
The little child—long loved and followed long,  
How have I strangled with this alien sadness  
The virgin voice within me of your song!

## TO —

IN the somber night of hope, under the trees  
Of the fruitless years where yet no flowers have  
been born,  
All in the first twilight of hope when the dawn  
Is a promised thing, quietly a prophetic breeze  
Has stirred murmurously the intertwined branches of  
these,  
Under the boughs of Time where I sit, nor mourn,  
Save always a little, for the many stars shall be  
withdrawn  
When the first breath of morning comes over the seas.  
O solemn first breath of Life blown out upon the air!  
With a faint crying of my heart I strive to give  
breath

To the innumerable dreams it awakens lying under-  
neath;  
But you by the tree of your life more green and more  
fair,  
Shall I not sing them to you, listening to them there,  
The dreams that shall blow in my heart until the  
twilight of death.

### THE FRIEND

AFAR the fresh sea shimmers,  
The sea-birds wheel and pass.  
I lie alone in the twilight  
Here, by the thin sea-grass.

A molten radiance slowly  
Wells through the sunset dim,—  
The thought of you that tenderly  
Trembles along the rim,

A golden, a luminous rapture;  
Heaven glows on either hand.  
What liberal thought and lovely  
Widens on sea and land?

Makes spacious the Void around me  
For breathing-spaces? See,  
My soul, too, widens exultant:  
Large-hearted, fresh, and free,

Drinks in deep draughts around her,  
To the deep core shot through!—  
Your great and gracious presence,  
The generous thought of you,

Of those great days together,  
Your golden and royal ways,  
Lifts me like golden music  
Out of the little days.







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